

Saudi oil minister set for U.S. visit but not arms talks

KUWAIT (R) — Saudi Arabian Oil Minister Ali Naimi will visit the United States next week as part of a large Saudi delegation but he is not expected to discuss oil-for-arms deals, Gulf sources said on Thursday.

"I do not believe that there have been even indirect hints (in recent exchanges between the two allies) that there is something like this in the air or laying the ground for it," one source said.

Prince Sultan, the defence minister, is due in France on Saturday and will later go to Washington at the head of a large Saudi Arabian delegation which will include Mr. Naimi, the trade and foreign ministers, a deputy finance minister and several other senior officials and ministers of state, Gulf sources told Reuters.

They said the prince, a full brother to King Fahd, was going to Washington on an official visit in his capacity as second deputy prime minister and not only as defence minister of the world's leading arms importer.

Saudi Arabia, the world's largest oil producer and exporter, has had a "special" relationship with the United States since the modern state was formed in 1932.

The two sides "will conduct a major policy review of bilateral ties, including oil, economic, trade, political, general security and many other issues," said a Gulf source.

There was speculation earlier this month that Prince Sultan planned to discuss an oil-for-arms formula with the United States amid speculation that Mr.

Naimi would accompany him to discuss details.

Industry experts say although Riyadh and Washington have been discussing a Saudi requirement for 100 fighter jets for several years, they doubt the two sides are close to a deal.

"Just look at what the White House sent Congress in December (proposed foreign military sales). There is no request for fighters for Saudi Arabia in 1997," one source familiar with the agenda for the talks said on Thursday.

Another expert earlier said: "I don't think a final announcement is imminent and Saudi Arabia has not made a formal request to buy F-16s." The Lockheed Martin warplane is high on the Saudi procurement list.

Saudi Arabia "learned its lesson and this is the end of it," one expert familiar with the programme said of Riyadh's oil-for-arms contract with London in the mid-1980s.

He said if Riyadh eventually finalised a deal for the fighters, state-owned Saudi oil company Aramco "will sell the oil, proceeds go to a trust fund at SAMA (Saudi Arabian Monetary Agency or central bank) and then SAMA pays for the aircraft."

In recent months Aramco ended a decade-old arrangement and took control of Al Yamamah \$20 billion oil-for-arms deal with Britain, under which, Royal Dutch/Shell group and British Petroleum marketed some Saudi crude, passing proceeds to British Aerospace to pay for the arms.

Turkey investigates 'human mine detectors' allegations

ANKARA (R) — A Turkish parliamentary commission will probe accusations that security forces made Kurdish villagers act as human mine detectors in the fight against separatist rebels, a government deputy said on Thursday.

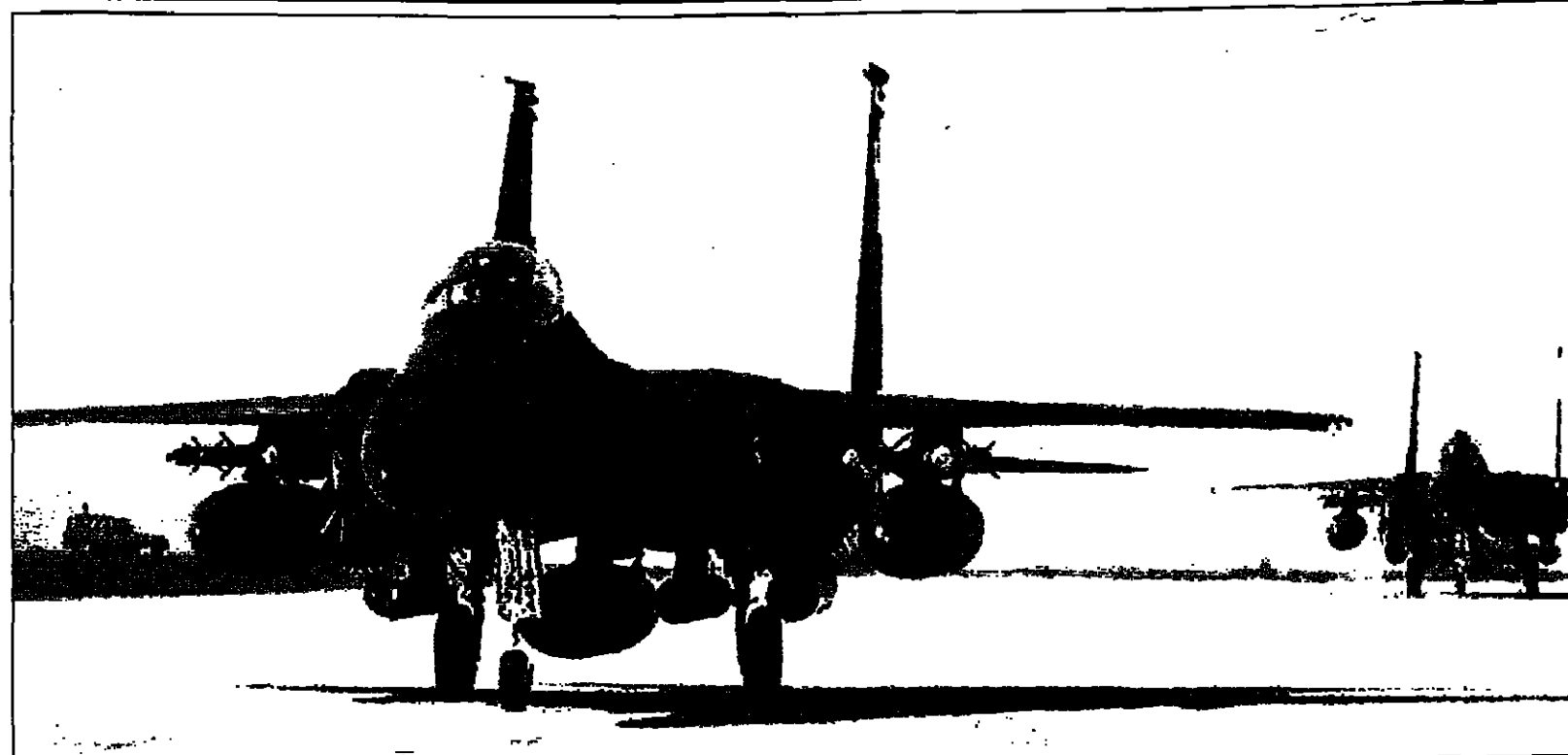
But a high-ranking security official said he doubted the allegations that troops forced residents of Tekevir village to walk in front of them over land where mines were believed to have been sown.

"I am hearing this for the first time but it sounds like a fable. Why would they use people when there are mine detectors?" the security official said by telephone from the southeastern city of

Diyarbakir. Government Deputy Musa Okcu said a parliamentary human rights delegation has to carry out an investigation in Tekevir on Friday. "The villagers told me that security forces had forced them to walk ahead to see if there were any mines on land near the village," Mr. Okcu told Reuters.

He said no mines were found in the incident which happened in the last week of December.

More than 20,000 people have been killed in 12 years of conflict between troops and Kurdish Labour Party guerrillas fighting for self-rule in the mainly Kurdish southeast.



MISSION IN QATAR: U.S. F15 warplanes land in a Qatari base in Doha. Some 30 U.S. warplanes started to arrive in Doha on Thursday on a temporary mission to support allied enforcement of a "no-fly zone" over southern Iraq. It is the second time an air expeditionary force has been deployed in Qatar, and follows similar deployments in Bahrain and Jordan (AFP photo)

Iranian ambassador and consul quit Turkey

ANKARA (AFP) — The Iranian ambassador in Ankara, under fire for allegedly stirring up Islamic fundamentalism in Turkey, has left the country, the Foreign Ministry said Friday. The Iranian consul to Istanbul, Mohammad Reza Rashid, who also made remarks backing Islamic law in an attempt to support ambassador Mohammad Reza Bagheri has also left Turkey, the ministry added.

"They are no longer in Turkey," an official said. "The ambassador has not officially notified the ministry that he was leaving Turkey," he continued, but did not give further details.

Mr. Bagheri said Islam would triumph throughout the world in a reference to the Islamic revolution in Iran, during Jerusalem night, organised on Jan. 31 by Bekir Yildiz, the pro-Islamic mayor of Sincan, a suburb of Ankara.

Secularism is one of the key tenets of the modern Turkish state and the remarks, hot on the heels of a recent series of pro-Islamic remarks by members of the ruling Islamist Welfare Party, whipped up a storm of protest from secular groups.

The Turkish Foreign Ministry sent a protest note to Mr. Bagheri, but Turkish lay circles, including the army, considered the measure inadequate.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Iraq denies intelligence links to Lebanon arrest

AMMAN (R) — An Iraqi official denied on Thursday reports that a man arrested in Lebanon for suspected involvement in the killing of Iraqi opposition figures was connected to Iraqi intelligence. Saadoun Dawoud, press attache at the Iraqi embassy in Amman, said the reports aimed at discrediting Baghdad and perpetuating U.N. sanctions imposed on Iraq for its 1990 invasion of Kuwait. Judicial sources in Beirut said on Wednesday Bassam Yaqoub Yousef, 28, had been arrested in a convent in Lebanon. He was being questioned over allegedly carrying out political assassinations in Kuwait, London, Morocco and Albania on behalf of the Iraqi intelligence, they said. "We completely deny any link between Bassam Yaqoub Yousef and Iraqi intelligence," Mr. Dawoud said in a statement. This news...is entirely fabricated, devoid of any truth, and paid for by Kuwaiti elements to harm Iraq's reputation and relations with its Arab brothers...to continue the oppressive sanctions imposed for more than six years on the women, children and elderly," he said. No official charges have been filed against Mr. Yousef who had last entered Lebanon on Oct. 15, 1996.

Lebanese shepherd killed in explosion

TYRE (AFP) — A shepherd guarding his flock was killed in an explosion Thursday in South Lebanon near the Israeli-occupied zone, security officials said. The cause of the blast which killed Khodr Ali Shehade, 23, in the Froun area, was not known, they added. A spokesman for the United Nations Interim Forces in Lebanon confirmed the incident and said an investigation into the origin of the explosion was underway.

Water wells destroyed in Egyptian anti-drug push

CAIRO (AFP) — Egypt's anti-drug squad has destroyed 100 wells in the Sinai peninsula which drug growers used to water fields, the government daily Al Massa reported Thursday. The newspaper, quoting a security official, said the measure was part of a major operation against drug growers in the south of the Sinai peninsula which was launched a few days ago. "The anti-drug squad blew up 100 wells in the Sinai which drug traffickers were using to water around 670 feddan of fields to grow narcotics," the official told the newspaper. Around 1,000 police backed by armoured cars and helicopters are carrying out a major operation against drug growers in the region, destroying around 520 acres of poppy, hashish and marijuana fields. Fifteen people were arrested in raids launched last week. Egyptian police launch raids in February of every year to coincide with the harvest of the drug crop.

Greek-Cypriot couple 'seeks asylum'

NICOSIA (AFP) — A Greek-Cypriot couple have crossed into the Turkish-held North and asked for political asylum, in the first such case since Cyprus was divided in 1974, Turkish-Cypriot police said Thursday.

Iran tightens Islamic dress code for women

TEHRAN (AFP) — Iran has issued on Thursday a new stricter Islamic dress code for women as part of its campaign to turn back encroaching Western influences.

The conservative newspaper Resalat published the guidelines laid out by the Martyr Ghodusi Judicial Centre, which specialises in fighting signs of "decadent" Western culture.

Islamic law, as interpreted here, calls for prison terms of three months to one year, or fines and up to 74 lashes of the whip for the following offences: Any woman wearing a "thin or short scarf in a way that it doesn't cover her entire hair and neck," according to an article provided by Judge Abolfazl Haj Ismaili.

Women dressed in "modish outfits such as suits and skirt without wearing a long overcoat on top." Iranian women have been required to wear a raincoat-like outfit over their regular dress and a scarf under the Islamic dress

code enforced after the 1979 Islamic revolution. But the regulations ban any mini or short-sleeved overcoat or those "flashy ones with fashionable cuts, decorated with any exotic insignia."

They also forbid women from wearing "short, thin or mismatched and glowing stockings" as well as those designed with "obscene patterns."

The ban includes wearing any "depraved, showy and glittery objects on hats, necklaces, earrings, belts, bracelets, glasses, headbands, rings, neckscarves and ties."

The list extends to the use of "punkish insignia such as the head of a rabbit or eagle, broken or whole cross and foreign flags or other pagan symbols, like victory or goodbye signs" on the clothing.

Clothing bearing pictures of foreign or Iranian celebrities who are symbols of sex or violence, notably any representation of (Hollywood characters) Rocky and Rambo" are also banned.

Held Iran editor telephones wife in Germany

BONN (R) — An arrested Iranian journalist whose fate is worrying the Bonn government has telephoned his wife in Germany to say he is well, but that he expects to be convicted, the Tageszeitung daily said on Thursday.

German Foreign Minister Klaus Kinkel has written two letters to Iran concerning Faraj Sarkuhi, whose wife, Farideh Zebajard, and two children live in Germany. Tehran says it arrested Mr. Sarkuhi for trying to leave Iran illegally ear-

lier this month. Mrs. Zebajard, in a story to be published on Friday, quotes Mr. Sarkuhi telling her from prison: "I am well, I can even listen to the radio and watch television."

He said he expected to be convicted, but did not say what for. The telephone call was the first confirmation that Mr. Sarkuhi, editor of the monthly Adineh (Friday), was still alive since he was arrested at the end of January.

Iraq limits number of pilgrims

BAGHDAD (AFP) — Iraq said Thursday it will limit the number of Iraqis making the pilgrimage to Mecca this year after announcing it would help fund the event for the first time since the 1991 Gulf war.

"The authorities will be forced to limit the number of pilgrims because of the cost of organising the pilgrimage," the minister of religious affairs, Abdul Monem Ahmad Saleh, told official newspapers.

Iraq can send 18,000 people under quotas set by the Organisation of the Islamic Conference but will allow only men over 55 years old and women over 50 who have never made a pilgrimage to the Saudi Holy City, he said.

Every Muslim is expected to make the Hajj at least once in his life if he can afford it.

Iraqi pilgrims will also be given a special exemption to leave the country with \$500 each, compared to the \$50 usually imposed on Iraqi travellers.

Foreign Minister Mohammad Al Sahaf, meanwhile, wrote to his counterparts in U.N. Security Council member countries to ask them to unblock \$50 million in Iraqi assets frozen abroad for the purpose of the Hajj.

Iraq's religious leaders decreed in 1995 that Iraqis could not make the pilgrimage because of the economic crisis caused by the U.N. sanctions imposed after the 1990 invasion of Kuwait.

The government announced Tuesday it would contribute to the costs of the pilgrimage for the first time since 1991. Unlike before the 1990-1991 Gulf crisis, Iraqis wanting to make the Hajj could receive no government support.

The move came after Iraq resumed limited oil exports in December under a humanitarian deal with the United Nations aimed at helping Iraq pay for food and medicine in the first easing of the sanctions.

Mrs. Zebajard said earlier this week that Mr. Sarkuhi's brother Ismail, also under arrest, had contacted her to say that if she cooperated with Tehran, her husband could be released in two or three months. He urged her to dismiss any forgery a letter from her husband in which he alleged he was held for six weeks and tortured by the Iranian secret service in Tehran late last year to force him to confess to spying for Germany.

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel. 773111-19

PROGRAMME TWO

14:08 Cartoon — Mickey & Donald Adventures
14:30 Cartoon — Moonin
15:00 French Programmes
16:00 Gillette
16:30 Doc. — Practical Guide to the Universe
17:00 News Headlines
17:10 Drama — Blue Fleets
18:00 French Programmes
19:30 News Headlines
19:35 Comedy — Hangin' With Mr. Cooper
20:00 Doc. — Magazine-01
20:30 Prism
21:10 Lois & Clark — The New Adventures of Superman
22:00 News in English
22:25 MacGyver
23:00 Feature Film: "De Ja Vu Vanessa"

PRAYER TIMES

04:50 Sunrise
06:08 Sunrise
11:49 Dhuhr
15:00 Asr
17:30 Maghreb
18:48 Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church
Sweifeh, Tel. 810740
Assemblies of God Church Tel. 632785
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440
De la Salle Church Tel. 661656
Terra Sancta Church Tel.

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

622366 Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623541
Anglican Church Tel. 652826
Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331
Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775261
St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751
Amman International Church Tel. 827126
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 824328
German-speaking Evangelical Congregation Tel. 845457
The Latter-Day Saints Tel. 654932
Church of Nazareth Tel. 675691
The Evangelical Local Church in Amman Tel. 811295
English-speaking Latin Catholics Parish Tel. 614190

Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 09, Aqaba 19 Humidity readings: Amman 97 per cent, Aqaba 51 per cent.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY
AMMAN:
Dr. Arafat Al Ashhab 602507
Dr. Ayman Al Muhtaseb 875748
Dr. Jamal Jbara 847351
Dr. Abbas Al Hakeem 885446
Firas pharmacy 661912
Ferdows pharmacy 778336
Al Asena pharmacy 637055
Nairokh pharmacy 623672
Al Salam pharmacy 636730
Yacoub pharmacy 644945
Shmeisani pharmacy 637660
Najib pharmacy 847632
IRBID:
Dr. Mazen Abu Baker 276852
Al Quds pharmacy 4—
ZARQA:
Dr. Dr. Hilal Al Sayed 986702
Khalifeh pharmacy 985417

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre 637111

Aqaba, it will be cloudy to partly cloudy with a chance of showers and winds southerly active and seas rough.
Min/Max temp.
Amman 04/08
Aqaba 10/17
Deserts 09/10
Jordan Valley 04/14

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EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre 637111

Civil Defence Department 661111
Civil Defence Immediate Rescue 630341
Civil Defence Emergency 199
Rescue Police 192 621111, 637777
Fire Brigade 617101
Blood Bank 775121
Highway Police 843402
Traffic Police 896390
Public Security Department 630321
Hotel Complaints 605800
Price Complaints 661176
Water and Sewerage Complaints 897467
Amman Municipality Complaints 787111
Telephone Information (directory assistance) 121
Overseas Calls 010230
Central Amman Telephone Repairs 623101
Abdali Telephone Repairs 661101
Jordan Television 773111
Radio Jordan 774111
Water Authority 680100
Jordan Electricity Authority 815615
Electric Power Company 636381
RJ Flight Information 08-53200
Queen Alia Intl. Airport 08-53200

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Hussein Medical Centre 813813/32
Khalidi Maternity, J. Amn 644281/6
Aldieh Maternity, J. Amn 642441/2
Jabal Amman Maternity 642362
Malhas, J. Amman 636140
Palestine, Shmeisani 607071
Shmeisani Hospital 669131
University Hospital 845845
Al-Muasher Hospital 6672279
The Islamic, Abdali 666126/37
Al-Ahli, Abdali 664164/6
Italian, Al-Muhajreen 777101/3
Al-Bashir, J. Ashrafieh 775111/26
Army, Marka 891611/15
Queen Alia Hospital 602240/50
Amal Hospital 674155
The Arab Centre for Heart and Special Surgery 865199
ZARQA:
Zarqa Govt. Hospital 09/983323
Zarqa National Hospital 09/900560
Ibn Sina Hospital 09/986732
Al Hikam Modern Hospital 09/990990
IRBID:
Princess Basma Hospital 02/275555
Greek Catholic Hospital 02/27275
Ibn Al Nafes Hospital 02/247100
AQABA:
Princess Haya Hospital

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EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre 637111

FOR THE TRAVELLER
QUEEN ALIA
INTERNATIONAL
AIRPORT
This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport. Tel. (08)53200 where it should always be verified. Information on other flights is obtained on telephone (08) 52700 or (08) 523250.

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights
08:55 Damascus (RJ)
09:30 Aqaba (add) (RJ)
09:45 New Delhi (RJ)
09:55 Karachi, Dubai (RJ)
10:05 Beirut (RJ)
10:30 Colombo (RJ)
14:45 New York, Amsterdam (RJ)
16:20 Cairo (RJ)
17:40 London, Berlin (RJ)
19:35 Vienna (RJ)
20:10 Lenz (add) (RJ)
05:35 Bangkok (add) (RJ)
Other Flights
12:40 Muscat, Abu Dhabi (GF)
15:05 Vienna (OS)
18:15 Dubai, Damascus (EK)
21:00 Paris, Damascus (AF)
22:20 Larnaca (CY)
22:25 Beirut (ME)
22:35 Amsterdam (KL)
23:40 Amsterdam, Beirut (KL)

23:50 London (KJ)
01:00 London, Damascus (BA)
03:45 Rome (AZ)
Royal Wings (RW) Flights
09:20 Aqaba (RW)
18:55 Sham Al Sheikh (RW)
DEPARTURES
Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights
06:20 Beirut (RJ)
07:00 Aqaba (add) (RJ)
09:00 Aqaba, Lenz (add) (RJ)
11:05 Vienna (RJ)
11:30 Amsterdam, New York (RJ)
11:50 Paris, Brussels (RJ)
12:00 Geneva, Madrid (RJ)
12:15 London (RJ)
12:15 Cairo (RJ)
20:00 Bombay (RJ)
20:05 Riyadh, Dhahran (RJ)
20:15 Bahrain, Doha (RJ)
20:20 Larnaca (RJ)
20:30 Aqaba (add) (RJ)
21:00 Abu Dhabi, Dubai (RJ)
Other Flights
00:15 Damascus, Amsterdam (KL)
03:00 Beirut, Athens (OA)
07:00 Beirut (ME)
13:30 Abu Dhabi, Bahrain (GF)
15:50 Vienna (OS)
19:15 Dubai (EK)
23:10 Larnaca (CY)
23:30 Cairo (MS)
23:55 Abu Dhabi, Bahrain (AF)
00:40 Amsterdam (KL)
04:35 Rome (AZ)
06:30 London (KJ)

MARKET PRICES

Upper/lower price in Jls per kg
Apple 700/500
Banana 550/550
Banana (imported) 1000/900
Cabbage 90/50
Carrot 160/120
Cauliflower 340/180
Cucumber (large) 180/120
Cucumber (small) 280/180
Eggplant 230/140
Fava beans 850/700
Garlic 1150/950
Grape fruit 180/100
Lemon 400/320
Marrow (large) 300/150
Marrow (small) 500/300
Onion (green) 180/140
Onion (dry) 200/130
Orange 450/250
Peas 900/700
Pepper (hot) 280/120
Pepper (sweet) 380/250
Potato 340/150
Radish 90/50
Spinach 250/150
String beans 850/500
Tomato 300/150

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Home News



Newly-appointed Iranian Ambassador to Jordan Mohammad Ali Sahbani Thursday presents his credentials to HRH Crown Prince Hassan at the Royal Court. Three more ambassadors followed suit — Mohammad Wuld Lakhal of Mauritania, Juan Antonio Llaro of Argentina and Stanislaw Polac of Poland. The ambassadors laid wreaths on the tombs of the late King Abdullah, founder of the Kingdom, and the late King Talal, father of His Majesty King Hussein. Chief Chamberlain Prince Raad Ben Zeid, Acting Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Abdul Hadi Majali, King Hussein's Advisor on Tribal Affairs Hamadi Fayez and Royal Court Secretary General Abdullah Seraj attended the ceremony.

Workshop covers Jordanian anxieties towards the peace process

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Jordanian anxieties and apprehensions regarding the peace process reflect a series of underlying concerns and disappointments which must be appreciated by all parties if the peace process is to achieve success, a Jordanian writer told a host of Jordanian, Palestinian, Egyptian and Israeli intellectuals Thursday.

"We can break [these] concerns" into five spheres, said columnist Rami Khouri. "Economic and material issues, domestic political issues, regional political issues, international issues and cultural issues."

Mr. Khouri was addressing participants in a two-day workshop, entitled "Fear of Peace" in which prominent personalities from Jordan, Palestine, Egypt and Israel convened to discuss Arab and Israeli social anxieties wrought by the peace process.

"The peace process has brought disappointment to the fore in Jordan's domestic political life. Beginning with the negotiations themselves, he said, Jordanians felt excluded from the process as they were never consulted nor asked to participate.

"The manner of negotiations was problematic for Jordanians," he continued, "so, although the majority may have supported it when it was signed, people oppose it to spite the government."

It also demonstrated the total ineffectiveness of the political opposition in Jordan, which frightens people, he said, while forcing people to question the intentions of the government.

"The opposition has done nothing of significance or credibility in the last 30 years," he said, save for its anti-normalisation activities.

The single most important cause for Jordanians' opposition to the current peace process was the "whimsical and arrogant manner" in which Israel deals with the Palestinians and other Arabs, refusing to recognise a pan-Arab identity.

He cited the Israeli bombing of Lebanon in April and the ensuing death of civilians at a U.N. compound in Cana as a turning point in the Jordanian public's opinion of Israel, which has further deteriorated with the election of Benjamin Netanyahu, policies of set-

dlement expansion, land confiscation and the reopening of a tunnel near Al Aqsa mosque in Jerusalem.

"We might not be able to do anything [to influence Arab-Israeli or inter-Arab relations], but we care," he said. "But if anti-normalisation is the only way that we can express our common Arab identity, we should do it."

Major General Shlomo Gazit of the Jaffee Center for Strategic Research in Tel Aviv discussed the implications of the peace process for the 180,000 Israeli settlers in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, who now pose one of the thorniest issues in negotiations.

"I want to make clear that no Israeli government is capable of adopting resolutions to remove settlers within the context of a peace agreement with any Arab party," he said.

He classified the settlers as being two groups: ideologues — 12-15 per cent of the total group — who moved to the territories to establish "Eretz Israel" and pragmatists who took advantage of economic incentives.

The easiest to deal with at the end of the day, he said, will ironically be highly religious ideologues.

"These people have one fear," he said, "which is the success of the agreement. For them, the Hebron agreement is the beginning of the end."

General Gazit predicted that this group would try to "sabotage" the agreement through political mobilisation or through the use of terror against Palestinian or Israeli targets.

However, he said, "once they realise their failure, they will have no reason to remain [in the territories]."

"They didn't go there to be a minority; they went as the forefront of an Israeli takeover," he said.

The second group, he said, may agree to remain if they are allowed to be Israeli citizens in a Palestinian state, depending on the specifics of the agreement.

The workshop also focused on cultural concerns, which, for both Arabs and Israelis, have been translated as the fear of a "loss of culture" and the fear of "cultural domination" by one party.

For Israelis, this translates into fear of assimilation, said Israeli author Shulamith Haraven.

"I would suggest that this fear is a strategy of group survival and lack of trust in

Members of municipal council threaten to resign over Zarqa mayor's detention

By Rana Hussein
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — As Zarqa Mayor Mustafa Fayad was recovering from high blood pressure over the weekend, efforts to procure his release from detention continued with some members of the Zarqa Municipal Council threatening to resign if the mayor is not released on bail.

"The council majority decided Friday to submit their resignation to the minister of municipal and rural affairs and the environment if Dr. Fayad is not released from prison," Deputy Mayor Mohammad Musa Gheiri said.

Dr. Fayad was ordered detained for 15 days pending trial on Wednesday by Zarqa Prosecutor Azzam Obeidat on charges of slandering Parliament.

A request to release the mayor on bail was rejected by the prosecutor and the court, the source told the Jordan Times Friday.

"We are not against the idea of a trial, we protest his detention," Mr. Gheiri told the Jordan Times.

The deputy mayor stated that the government assured him Friday that it would exert every effort to release Mr. Gheiri on bail.

"I met Friday with the minister of justice and the speaker of the Lower House," he stated, "and I received a positive response from both."

Dr. Fayad was transferred Thursday from Berlin prison, north of Amman, to Zarqa Government Hospi-

tal.

He had been quoted as describing three-fourths of the deputies in Parliament as "liars" in the Islamist weekly Al Sabeel.

The mayor was also quoted as stating in the interview, "I do not like the whole Parliament and that is my opinion."

His statements angered many deputies including Speaker of the Lower House of Parliament Saad Hayel Srour who sent a letter to Minister of Justice Abdul Karim Dughmi requesting the latter to take legal action.

In a Thursday interview with the Arabic daily Al Ra'i, Dr. Fayad denied the statement attributed to him.

"My intention was not to slander the Parliament and what I actually said in the interview was that three-fourths of the deputies in the world are liars," he said.

The Islamist weekly had interviewed both Dr. Fayad and his predecessor Yasser Omari on the municipalities' performances during their respective administrations.

The interviews were run opposite to each other.

Dr. Fayad's remarks in the Al Sabeel interview apparently came in response to Islamist Deputy Bassam Emoush's (Zarqa) remarks in two separate Parliamentary sessions that Zarqa Municipality had been extorting money from citizens and that Dr. Fayad had bribed a reporter by giving him a kiosk in return for news coverage.

Indian embassy organising trade promotion week

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Embassy of India in Amman is organising the second Indo-Jordan Trade Promotion Week from February 23 to 27, 1997, an Embassy of India statement said Friday.

The objective of the week-long event is to create a greater awareness among the business community in Jordan regarding the existing potential of collaboration with their Indian counterparts, it said.

The event was conceived to facilitate business contacts between the two countries as well as to identify avenues for implementing joint venture collaborations and expansions of bilateral trade.

It will be a follow-up to the "Trade Promotion Week" held in Jan., 1996 and aims at systematically actualising promotional activities in trade, investment, technology transfer, services and other industrial sectors, the embassy stated.

As part of the second Indo-Jordan Trade Promotion Week, coinciding with the fiftieth anniversary of India's independence, several activities are being organised by the Indian Embassy in Amman.

The Jordanian business community has access to a comprehensive and updated computerised database on Indian industry and trade, the statement said.

Several trade directories have been provided for complimentary distribution to interested visitors to the embassy, it added.

There will be a special focus on "thrust" products which hold immense potential for accelerating the pace of bilateral trade activities, the embassy stated.

During the week, the commercial attaché and other officials of the embassy will be available for consultation, guidance on specific trade-related queries and any other assistance required by the Jordanian business community, the embassy stated.

In 1995, Indian exports of animal feed to Jordan totalled more than \$18 million, and continues to be the leading item of export from India to Jordan, it said.

The embassy is holding a "buyer-seller meeting" in cooperation with the Federation of the Jordanian Chambers of Commerce at 11:00 a.m. on Feb. 26, at the Conference Hall of the Amman Chamber of Commerce as part of the Promotion Week package.

Over 200 Jordanian businesspersons participated in the first Indo-Jordanian Trade Promotion Week last year and the upcoming fair intends to reiterate and further consolidate the commitment of both countries to boosting bilateral trade, the statement concluded.

Jordanian prisoners call for support of hunger strike

AMMAN (J.T.) — Jordanian prisoners in Israeli jails have issued a call for support for a week-long hunger strike which they plan to stage starting Sunday in protest of their continued detention.

They also addressed open letters to His Majesty King Hussein and Palestinian President Yasser Arafat as well as national and humanitarian groups in Jordan and Palestine.

"We hold great hope for your help as we feel the dawn of freedom is approaching," the prisoners said in the letter. "We have great confidence in you and we hope that you will not abandon us nor leave your sons and freedom fighters languishing behind bars. You no doubt appreciate our struggle for freedom and we do not doubt your backing for us and for our rights and freedom."

"As we issue this appeal, we are certain that you will continue to support us and back our moves to secure our release. Our

slogan will always be: 'Freedom for all Prisoners,'" the statement said.

Palestinian detainees in Israeli jails sent a letter to Jordanian Ambassador to Israel Omar Rifai in which they said: "Today we are calling on you to come to the aid of our brothers, the Jordanian prisoners in Israeli jails, who are staging a one-week hunger strike as a first step starting Sunday Feb. 22 in protest against their continued detention by Israel, which refuses to commit itself to an Israeli-Jordanian agreement that provides for the release of the Jordanian detainees in Israeli prisons."

The Palestinian detainees in Israeli jails voiced solidarity with their Jordanian prisoners and appealed for support from various organisations.

The prisoners' appeal was handed to Buthaina Dughma, a Palestinian lawyer during a visit to Askalan Prison on Feb. 16.

UNRWA inaugurates new services compound

By Sacha Baggili
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The inaugural ceremony Thursday for a new United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) services compound in the town of Waqas in the north of the Jordan Valley, highlighted the agency's new strategy of aiding refugees in the region as part of its Peace Implementation Programme (PIP).

An exhibition of the project's construction plans, first initiated in 1993, Mr. Sager added.

In his speech at the inaugural ceremony in Waqas, Commissioner General for UNRWA Peter Hansen stated that the agency was keen to improve the lives of Palestinian refugees both inside and outside the refugee camps.

"This project for a comprehensive facility demonstrates that Palestinian refugees are not simply passive aid recipients," Mr. Hansen said.

According to Mr. Hansen, Palestinian refugees cooperate in the PIP's objective of "help for self-help."

He further added that this project could be replicated in other locations in the region.

"Other mayors have been keen to provide plots of land if funding is made available for the construction of similar facilities. These are all steps of further cooperation between UNRWA and the refugee community in this region," Mr. Hansen asserted.

Waqas Mayor Mohammad Abdul Salam concurred, stating that the new facility is an example "of the fruits of peace which the governments of Jordan and the United States, which remains the single biggest cash contributor to UNRWA, have been dedicated to achieving."

Lewis Lucke, director of the U.S. Aid Mission to

registered with UNRWA had been hindering the agency's desire to expand its services as part of its new programme.

"The new UNRWA compound is the first of its kind in Jordan, as it integrates four fields of work in one building," he said. "By providing easy access, the number of beneficiaries in this area will be greatly increased."

"This is a positive reflection of UNRWA's peace implementation plan, first initiated in 1993," Mr. Sager added.

In his address at the ceremony, Mr. Lucke praised the government of Jordan for "its substantial, ongoing commitment to the well-being of Palestinian refugees."

Jordan has the "largest number of refugees and displaced persons of any UNRWA host country and provides significant material [aid] by way of moral and political support," he continued.

According to Mr. Sager, the Waqas community and surrounding neighbourhoods developed as a direct result of people fleeing areas of the West Bank, which are directly opposite the Northern Jordan Valley, during the 1948 and 1967 wars.

"Most of the population here originated from Bisun, they are rural people who historically make their living through agriculture," he said.

Mr. Hansen referred to the community's "intelligent and hardworking farmers" adding that he "anticipates the happy occasion early next year" when the comprehensive facility is opened and the "deserving community of Waqas" begin to reap the benefits of UNRWA's Peace Implementation Programme.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Prince visits Aqaba Region Authority

AQABA (Petra) — Chief Chamberlain Prince Raad Ben Zeid Thursday visited the Aqaba Region Authority (ARA) where he met with President Fayez Khasawneh. Dr. Khasawneh affirmed the construction of four hotels, with a total of 1,000 rooms, at the estimated cost of JD100 million. Dr. Khasawneh explained that ARA will set up a multi-purpose sports hall for the handicapped on a five dunum plot of land as well as a kindergarten for children with special needs. The kindergarten will comprise a boarding home, treatment and rehabilitation rooms. The authority has also prepared plans to reconstruct the Aqaba Grand Mosque at an estimated cost of JD160,000.

Ministry of Education decides upon exam schedules

AMMAN (Petra) — The Ministry of Education Friday released the general secondary certificate examination schedules for the scholastic year 1996/1997. Ministry Examination Department Director Ahmad Salem said the ministry introduced two schedules for this year — one for students who have previously failed the exam and the other for those taking it for the first time.

JBA to participate in Mauritanian event

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Jordanian Businessmen's Association (JBA) will participate in the six-day meeting of the Second African-Arab Businessmen's Week, due to be held in Mauritania from March 17 to March 20, according to a press release issued by JBA. The week aims to strengthen Afro-Arab cooperation in economic, trade and financial fields. Taking part in the meetings will be representatives from the Arab League, the Organisation of African Unity, the Arab League Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organisation (ALECSO), directors of various Arab and African companies and businesspersons.

What's Going On

EXHIBITIONS

* Works by artist Amanda Shetadeh at the French Cultural Centre, until March 6.
* Display of Jordan River Designs Products, Jabal Amman (Tel. 613081/2) until Feb. 28.
* Art exhibition by Nazliha Salim at Orient Gallery, Isam Ajlouni St., Shmeisani, until Feb. 28.

* Bani Hamida exhibition/sale of handicrafts (rugs, cushions, runners, and wall-hangings, Jabal Amman (Tel. 658696/7), until Feb. 28.
* Works by contemporary Arab artists entitled "The New Collection" at Darat Al Funun, Jabal Weibdeh, (Tel. 643251/2), until Feb. 27.

Zairean army still pursues conflict despite peace initiative

KINSHASA (AFP) — Zaire is determined to fight rebels controlling much of the east of the country and has kept its army on a war-footing despite moves to launch peace talks with the guerrillas, the Defence Ministry said Friday.

Even as mediation efforts in South Africa gathered pace, Deputy Defence Minister General Likulia Bolongo stressed that no ceasefire order had been issued to troops battling rebel forces.

The Zairean army "has been instructed to wage war to free the occupied regions and bring peace to the country and it has not yet received a counter order to stop hostilities," Gen. Bolongo said in a statement.

"Negotiation is a political move and must not be a capitulation," he added, referring to possible talks between the opposing forces under South African mediation. "Zairean army forces are thus determined to pursue the war to the final victory."

The statement came as a deadline issued by rebel leader Laurent-Désiré Kabila for talks to start expired.

Mr. Kabila, whose rebels

have advanced deep into Zaire after capturing a swathe of territory in the east late last year, warned that his forces would launch an all-out offensive if Kinshasa failed to respond to his ultimatum.

An aide to Mr. Kabila said Friday that the rebel leader was not attending peace talks that South Africa is trying to arrange in Cape Town.

A South African newspaper reported Thursday that Mr. Kabila and an envoy from the Zairean government had arrived Wednesday in Cape Town.

Meanwhile in Kisangani, the northern Zairean town which has become a military base for the army's counter-offensive, fears of a rebel attack were widespread following the expiration of Mr. Kabila's deadline.

Residents were concerned not only of the possible carnage that an offensive could wreak, but also of the reputation of Zairean army forces to resort to rape and pillage in retreating from the attacking Tutsi.

Some with the financial means and with family in Kinshasa have already fled

by boat to the Zairean capital.

Meanwhile, a Zairean rebel official said Friday that Mr. Kabila was ready for his forces to talk to Zairean government officials, but only if they were mandated to take decisions.

Deo Bugera, speaking in this rebel-held town in eastern Zaire, said Mr. Kabila was not yet in the South African city of Cape Town, where talks are expected to take place, despite media reports.

Mr. Bugera said Mr. Kabila "is very much in favour of negotiation but not with people who are not mandated to take a decision."

He added that Mr. Kabila had not yet left for South Africa and was "currently in Bukavu," an eastern Zairean town held by the rebels.

A South African newspaper, the Star, reported Thursday that Mr. Kabila and a "special envoy from Kinshasa" had arrived in Cape Town late Wednesday.

The paper quoted South African Foreign Affairs Director-General Rusty Evans.

However, at the United Nations in New York U.N. spokesman Fred Eckhard told reporters that Mr. Kabila was expected in South

Africa "by the weekend" following the arrival of a government team.

He said South African Deputy President Thabo Mbeki had informed U.N. Secretary General Kofi Annan "that a Zairean delegation has arrived in South Africa, and that a delegation on the side of the rebels, headed by Mr. Kabila, is expected to arrive in South Africa by the weekend," Mr. Eckhard said.

Mr. Bugera however confirmed that the rebels' foreign affairs "minister," Bizima Kahama, "had preliminary contacts in Cape Town aimed at agreeing the scope of the negotiations" with representatives of ailing Zairean President Mobutu Sese Seko.

South Africa has imposed a virtual news blackout on efforts to bring the two warring sides together.

If they do meet, it will be the first such gathering since civil war broke out in eastern Zaire in October when Mr. Kabila's mainly Tutsi rebel forces rose up in a campaign to overthrow Mr. Mobutu. They accuse him of trying to deny them nationality and seeking to expel them to Rwanda, their ancestral home.



Pakistani policemen carry the body of a victim from the Iranian Centre in Multan town of Punjab province Thursday. At least eight people, including the director of the Iranian Cultural Centre, were killed after unidentified gunmen attacked the centre (Reuters photo)

Underground Pakistani groups claim murder of Iranian diplomat

ISLAMABAD (AFP) — A militant group, named after the slain founder of an extremist Muslim faction, has claimed responsibility for the murder of an Iranian diplomat and six others in Pakistan, press reports said Friday.

The claim was made in messages sent to newspapers late Thursday, hours after gunmen killed seven people in the Iranian Cultural Centre in Multan, including the Iranian consul, Mohammad Ali Rahimi.

The Lashkar-i-Jhangvi Group blamed Iran for a bomb blast on Jan. 18 in the eastern city of Lahore. Its message said: "We have taken revenge for the terrorist act in which the head of the Sunni militants Sipah-i-Sahaba Pakistan (SSP), and 25 others were killed. It alleged that SSP leader Ziaur Rahman Farooqi was murdered at the 'instigation' of Iran when he was taken un-

der heavy police escort from a jail to the Lahore Sessions Court in connection with sectarian violence.

The underground group which had claimed responsibility for previous incidents, is named after the SSP founder Haq Nawaz Jhangvi, who was shot dead in 1990 in the Punjab town of Jhang.

Claiming that "our targets are only those who are enemies of Sahaba (companions of Prophet Muhammad)," a joint statement from the groups' leaders Abu Qasim Malik Mohammad Isbaq and Mohammed Riaz, said that while killing Rahimi it did not harm the policemen on duty.

The SSP, headquartered in Jhang, had reportedly expelled Mr. Riaz nicknamed as Riaz Basra about two years ago for his extremist policies.

Rahimi's body is being flown to Iran in a special

Pakistan Air Force plane late Friday. Mushahid Hussain, a close aide of Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, will accompany the body, the foreign office here said.

Mr. Sharif has condemned the murder and ordered investigations into the killings and arrest of those involved in the attack.

Officials said security had been tightened around Iranian installations after the killings.

A foreign office spokesman expressed "deep shock" over the murder and said whatever the motivations of the perpetrators, "we will never allow anyone to disrupt our time-tested relations with Iran."

Vowing to continue to work in close concert with the government of Iran in safeguarding "our deep friendship," he said the two countries would "defeat the nefarious designs of such criminal and terrorist elements."

No progress on N. Korean defector expected until after Deng funeral

SEOUL (AFP) — South Korea does not expect progress in talks with China on the fate of a top North Korean defector until after the funeral of Chinese patriarch Deng Xiaoping, a senior official said Friday.

"I think we can wait until the mourning period ends on Feb. 25," Foreign Ministry Asia-Pacific Affairs Director Ryu Kwang-Sok said.

"I don't think it is desirable from the point of view of traditional oriental etiquette for us to give the impression that we are urging China on the Hwang issue

during the mourning period," Mr. Ryu said.

But he added the Chinese side had advised South Korean diplomats that they should feel free to contact them "if the need arises" during the mourning period for Mr. Deng who died Wednesday at the age of 92.

The defector, 74-year-old Hwang Yang-Yop has been booted up in the South Korean consulate in Beijing behind heavy Chinese security since he walked into the building Feb. 12 and asked for asylum.

North Korea at first angrily charged that Mr. Hwang,

Pyeongyang's top ideologue, had been abducted, then conceded that he could have defected.

Mr. Ryu also told a press briefing here that negotiations over the defection with Chinese authorities had "yet to reach the point at which we can discuss the terms and conditions of sending Mr. Hwang to the South."

The defection has posed a delicate problem for Beijing which maintains a careful equidistant policy towards the rigidly Stalinist North, its old ally during the 1950-53 Korean War, and Seoul.

Shuttle ends successful Hubble mission

CAPE CANAVERAL, Florida (AFP) — The U.S. space shuttle Discovery landed early Friday at Kennedy Space Centre after a successful 10-day mission to change the Hubble space telescope into a "new window" to the unknown.

The shuttle made a smooth touchdown here at 3:32 a.m. (0832 GMT), some 90 minutes later than originally planned due to cloud cover over the landing site.

It was the ninth landing of the U.S. shuttle programme, which has run 81 space missions. Four night landings, including the Discovery's, took place at Cape Canaveral; the remaining five, at California's Edwards Air Force Base. After their launch on Feb. 11, the Discovery's crew of seven astronauts gave Hubble a new computer system, installed new imaging devices and patched up the exterior of the space telescope over the course of five spacewalks totaling 33 hours, 11 minutes.

Discovery released the telescope early Wednesday, 580 kilometres above the Earth. "You have opened a new window on the world," NASA Administrator Daniel Goldin told the astronauts after the release manoeuvre.

"We have Hubble space telescope II," said Ed Weiler, director of scientific programming at Johnson Space Centre in Houston, Texas.

With the new equipment, scientists are hoping the Hubble telescope will see further than ever, allowing them to observe the formation of galaxies.

Since it was placed in orbit in 1990, Hubble has offered scientists views of the collision of galaxies, the surface of Pluto, the birth of stars and has revealed the existence of quasars.

The telescope's exterior insulation, tattered and torn after years of exposure to temperature extremes, was repaired with makeshift patches during an unscheduled fifth spacewalk.

Rudd Moel, who was in charge of the repairs, back on Earth, said the space mission was "a big success, including the surprises."

The telescope should operate smoothly until the next repair mission in 1999, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) said. Its total life expectancy is 15 years.

Liz Taylor's undergoes brain surgery

LOS ANGELES (AFP) — Doctors removed a benign tumour Thursday from actress Elizabeth Taylor's brain lining and predicted that she would make a full recovery.

"The tumour was totally removed," said Dr. Martin Cooper, head of the Neurosurgery Department at Cedars-Sinai Medical Centre, adding that "everything went quite smoothly."

"Ms. Taylor is resting comfortably in the intensive care unit," he said after leading the four-hour operation. He said she was recovering from her anaesthesia and had begun moving her extremities.

Asked at a news conference about the risk of epileptic seizures that sometimes follows

brain surgery, he said there was only a "small chance" this could happen, though "it is too early to tell."

"The next 24 hours are important for her and we'll see how she is going to do. But we expect a full recovery," Dr. Cooper said.

Ms. Taylor's children and grandchildren were at her bedside after the operation, her spokeswoman, Shirine Ann Coburn said.

Ms. Coburn said that when she went into the surgery Ms. Taylor was "pretty positive about the whole thing, pretty optimistic. Now she's a little woozy," she said Ms. Taylor was besieged by phone calls from around the world and "thanks all her friends and fans for all their good wishes."

Among the cockpit crew was a former Soviet pilot who is helping to train Sri Lankans in the use of ex-Russian aircraft, the sources said. The air force did not give the name of the foreign pilot.

The cause of the crash was not immediately clear but witnesses said the plane broke into two after hitting the ground.

130 Sri Lankan refugees die on the way to India

COLOMBO (AFP) — At least 130 Sri Lankan Tamil refugees drowned when their boat capsized on its way to India, Tamil Tiger guerrillas said over their clandestine radio Friday.

The overloaded boat was carrying 150 passengers when it sank two days ago off the island's northwestern Mannar coast, the separatist Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) said.

The Tiger radio said only 20 of the 150 passengers were rescued and quoted the survivors as saying the boat operator was under the influence of alcohol at the time of the tragedy.

The Tigers said 85 bodies had been recovered and announced a day of mourning Saturday for the victims. They said 62 of the bodies had been identified while a search was on for the other victims.

The incident took place in an area where the government has little control and no direct communications are available.

The boat tragedy occurred as thousands of government soldiers kept up an advance to link the northern town of Vavuniya with the northwestern military base at Mannar.

Fourteen people were killed off the coast of Mannar in a similar boat accident in October when a craft meant to take 40 passengers was loaded with 110 men, women and children.

An identical boat with 105 Tamil men, women and children was detained by the Sri Lankan Navy in October and the passengers told authorities the Tigers forced them to seek refuge in neighbouring southern India.

Sri Lanka and India have stepped up naval patrols to prevent an exodus of Tamil refugees fleeing to the southern Indian state of Tamil Nadu, where thousands of Sri Lankans have already taken refuge over last year.

Thousands of Sri Lankan Tamils fled to Tamil Nadu in a massive exodus after some 600 Tamils were killed in ethnic violence in the south of the country in July 1983.

A second exodus occurred after the LTTE resumed its war against the Sri Lankan government in June 1990. Many went back over the years, although Tamil Nadu is still home to more than 100,000 refugees.

While nearly 57,000 of them are housed in Indian government-aided camps, the others live on their own across Tamil Nadu, which is home to 55 million Indian Tamils.

Although support for the LTTE has dwindled in Tamil Nadu since the Tigers were blamed for former Indian Premier Rajiv Gandhi's assassination in 1991, some political parties still back their cause.

Meanwhile, a military transporter crashed just outside the Sri Lankan capital Friday, killing at least 45 soldiers and injuring 45, officials said.

The Russian-built Antonov-32B aircraft was taking off with a full load of security personnel when it plunged into a swamp within the Ratmalana Airport, officials said.

They said the plane was on a routine flight to the northern air base of Palali taking troops to battle separatist Tamil Tiger guerrillas when the under carriage collapsed, causing the pilots to ditch the aircraft.

Among the cockpit crew was a former Soviet pilot who is helping to train Sri Lankans in the use of ex-Russian aircraft, the sources said. The air force did not give the name of the foreign pilot.

The cause of the crash was not immediately clear but witnesses said the plane broke into two after hitting the ground.

Chirac: Moscow ties NATO expansion to accord

BUCHAREST (R) — French President Jacques Chirac was quoted as saying that Russia would accept the inclusion of up to five new members in an expanded NATO if the alliance signed a separate deal with Moscow.

"Either there is this accord and they (Russia) are ready to accept the admission to NATO of three, four or five countries, or there is no accord and then they will oppose the expansion of the alliance," Mr. Chirac told the Bucharest daily Adeva-

rusian President Boris Yeltsin earlier this month.

Russia has repeatedly opposed NATO's eastward expansion due to be announced in July, but has said its security concerns could be allayed by the conclusion of a separate accord with the Atlantic alliance.

Foreign Ministry Spokesman Sergei Yastrzhembsky said in Moscow before U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright's arrival that an accord "is meant to reduce to a minimum the unavoidable negative consequences of the bloc's expansion."

In his interview, Mr. Chirac said Mr. Yeltsin had no objections to France's

drive to have Romania included in the first wave of expansion. "The Russians will not pose difficulties for Romania," he told Adeva-

Hungary, Poland and the Czech Republic are favourites for rapid inclusion but the prospects for Romania and Slovenia appear to have improved recently.

France, he said, would help Romania put to good advantage its strategic position on the Black Sea and with ex-Soviet Ukraine as its northern neighbour creating a land corridor towards Poland.

"For NATO, it (Romania) is very important, especially for the southern flank of the alliance," he said.

Mr. Chirac singled out the peaceful transfer of power in Romania's elections last November, when centrists ousted ex-Communists for the first time since the 1989 execution of dictator Nicolae Ceausescu.

He was expected during his two-day visit to back Bucharest's goal of eventually joining the European Union.

France also encouraged Bucharest and Kiev to overcome differences rooted in World War II and sign a long-delayed post-Communist treaty. Mr. Chirac praised a similar pact which Romania signed with Hungary last September, ending old rifts over borders and ethnic minorities.

Algerian rebels reportedly kill 180 government forces

PARIS (Agencies) — Algeria's Islamic Salvation Army, the armed wing of the outlawed Islamic Salvation Front, said in a statement its guerrillas had killed over 180 members of the security force in recent clashes in 13 regions across Algeria.

The statement, sent Thursday to an international news organisation, said that among the government forces killed were about 80 soldiers and paramilitaries shot dead in "fierce confrontations" in the western region of Saida.

It was not possible to verify the statement which was dated Feb. 15.

More than 180 Muslim guerrillas have been killed by the Algerian security forces in Algiers and nearby towns in the past four weeks, according to Algerian newspapers.

Meanwhile, a moderate Algerian Islamic leader warned Thursday that it appeared some factions in Algeria wanted to provoke his movement to violence, reporting that 115 of his sup-

porters have been killed in five years.

Ex-presidential candidate Mahfoud Nahnah, leader of the Islamic Society Movement (MSI - Hamasi), said "certain forces" wanted to draw his group into the spiral of violence which has racked Algeria since the cancellation of general elections in January 1992.

He said the most recent deaths of MSI members were the killings of five young women decapitated and left in the street in a village near Algiers. He gave no further details.

The Islamic leader, defeated in November 1995 presidential ballots, accused the unidentified forces of "wanting to push us to dirty our hands and implicate us in the bloodshed," in the Arab language Al Hayat newspaper.

Hamas, which recruits mainly among the middle class, is the second most important fundamentalist party after the banned Islamic Salvation Front (FIS).

Mr. Nahnah believes in a

modern and tolerant Islam and a positive coexistence between all political movements but has vowed not to sit down at the conference table with "those who come with a Kalashnikov."

Armed militants have threatened to kill him but he is equally mistrusted by more moderate politicians who have accused him of wanting the same objective ultimately as the FIS: A hardline Islamic state.

Unrest has reached fever pitch in Algeria in recent weeks, with more than 400 civilians killed by Islamic militant groups according to unofficial death tolls.

In 1993, MSI Deputy Leader Mohammed Bouslimani was assassinated by the Armed Islamic Group (GIA), Algeria's most hardline militant group.

U.S. officials estimate that 60,000 people have been killed since the cancellation of the second round of general elections the FIS was poised to win five years ago.

U.S. moves to head off repeat of Cuba shutdown

WASHINGTON (R) — The United States has moved to avoid a repeat of last year's shooting down of Cuban exiles by Cuban government jets, warning both sides to respect the law during a planned exile demonstration next week.

The State Department told Florida-based exiles planning to fly planes near the coast of Cuba Monday they would be in "serious danger" if they entered Cuban airspace or territorial waters without Cuba's permission.

But the department said in a statement it had also urged Cuba to respect the safety of anyone who did enter its territory during ceremonies to mark the first anniversary of the shooting down of two exile-operated light planes.

At the Pentagon, Defence Department spokesman Ken Bacon told reporters that the U.S. military did not "plan any different procedures or heightened alerts on Feb. 24."

The U.S. statement was issued hours after the Cuba warned that it would tolerate no violations of its airspace or territorial waters during the ceremonies.

Cuban Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Mariela Ferriol, asked if Cuba might be prepared to use force, said: "We will take all measures necessary to prevent a violation of our airspace or territorial waters."

Cuban-American groups in Florida said last week their plans to mark the anniversary included sending planes to international waters between Cuba and Florida to drop wreaths over the site of the plane downings.

Hong Kong's future leader reappoints top colonial team

HONG KONG (R) — Hong Kong's future leader Tung Chee-Hwa chose continuity and announced Thursday he would reappoint Hong Kong's top tier of civil servants to their positions in his post-colonial administration.

Hong Kong's popular and influential Chief Secretary Anson Chan, deputy to departing British Governor Chris Patten, will serve as Mr. Tung's number two when Hong Kong reverts to China later this year.

Her post will be renamed administrative secretary.

Financial Secretary Donald Tsang would also remain in his position as Hong Kong's top economic policy planner, a decision likely to be welcomed by the markets.

"I am very pleased that all eligible serving officers have been appointed as principal officials in their present posts," Mr. Tung said in a statement issued to the media upon his return to Hong Kong Thursday.

More than 150 years of British rule ends at mid-

night on June 30, 1997, now 131 days away.

Prominent lawyer Elsie Leung was named as secretary for justice, replacing Attorney General Jeremy Mathews who, as a non-ethnic Chinese, was not eligible to remain in his position.

Mr. Tung had flown to Beijing to report on his decision to China's top leadership, landing in the Chinese capital just hours before the announcement of the death of paramount leader Deng Xiaoping.



Hundreds of people gathered for the funeral of a man who was killed in a bomb attack on a bus in Athens, who transferred to a power house. Deng died

Greek cou

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Peruvian bodies

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Glenn ann

WASHINGTON (R) —... Astronaut... and Thursday he... from the U.S... and marked the... of his oth... Earth by announc... Space Day to... promote space e...

Glenn now a Democr... from May be... the first American to... Feb. 20, 1961... three orbits in... before his Me... landed in... Atlantic Ocean near the...

It's hard for me to... that it's been... Sen. Glenn said... in Washin... recalled it so... it seems to me... like a month ago

Kalashnikov said Thursday, 10 million Kalashnikovs of produced since 1947 and are arms export agency which is "second slice of the world arms" "second to none" until at least is around the Communist and China to Europe.

crack up a warm personal American designer of the M- he had scarcely made a rou-

oked Thursday.

By Dr. Musa Keila nian tourism

in area continue up. We therefore expect to see more demonstrations and protests against the project soon.

Importantly, the Han Hanna project, coupled with the demolition of the old building, poses serious dangers to the historic and cultural heritage of the city.

It is the responsibility of the government to protect the historic and cultural heritage of the city. The government should not allow the demolition of the old building and the construction of the new building without proper planning and consultation with the public.

The government should also ensure that the project is carried out in a way that does not damage the historic and cultural heritage of the city. The government should also ensure that the project is carried out in a way that is in the best interests of the city and its people.

Morocco f Jerusalem

owners under international law and implementation of U.N. Security Council resolutions, according to the Arab League. He expressed his support for the Arab League's position on the issue.

Mr. Netanyahu said that the Israeli government is committed to the peace process and to the establishment of a Palestinian state. He said that the Israeli government is committed to the peace process and to the establishment of a Palestinian state.

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Netanyahu due in Amman tomorrow

(Continued from page 1)

for the future.

"We have discussed at length the Jerusalem question which will be discussed further later on by officials from the two countries to search for areas for future cooperation in this and other matters," added King Hussein.

King Hassan II chairs the Jerusalem Committee of the Organisation of Islamic Conference.

Commenting on his visit to Ireland, King Hussein said he was overwhelmed by the hospitality accorded to him and the accompanying delegation and was deeply impressed with Ireland's achievements.

He referred to Crown Prince Hassan's recent visit to France and Switzerland and said the result of the tour was reassuring.

"The Europeans displayed keenness on supporting the peace process and the Palestinians in their quest to regain their homeland and on finalising the Jordanian-European partnership agreement," the King said.

On prospects for the resumption of Syrian-Israeli and Lebanese-Israeli negotiations, the King said: "I cannot say that Jordan plays a specific role in this

issue but Jordan is for a comprehensive peace and hopes to achieve it on all tracks."

In reply to a question on Israel's stand on properties of Palestinians evicted from Palestine since 1948, the King said: "I believe this question will be discussed at a later stage when lights will be focused on the implementation of U.N. resolutions and the right of Palestinians to repatriation or compensation."

"We are determined to demand that the rights be restored to their legitimate owners," he added.

While in Ireland, the King called for increased efforts to advance the peace process.

Speaking to reporters in the presence of Irish Prime Minister John Bruton the King said: "I want to express my happiness on visiting your country which we duly respect and whose people face similar challenges like ours."

"I had the desire for so long to visit Ireland and I am pleased to make the visit to a country where my daughter lives and where she feels as if she is in her homeland and among friends."

The King described Jordanian-Irish relations as strong but said there was

vast scope for closer cooperation.

At a dinner hosted by Mr. Bruton on Wednesday night, King Hussein outlined Jordan's endeavours for peace, stability and security and its on going efforts to serve as a model for others in the Middle East region.

"We are a Christian-Muslim pluralistic community and a united family giving sanctuary to all who seek protection and safe haven from around the world and from the Arab countries especially the who are now Jordanian citizens and constitute important members of our united Jordanian family," the King said.

"We hope to do all that in our power to see peace prevailing the whole region which should enjoy security and progress especially as our part of the world is the cradle of the three monotheistic religions."

"We will remain committed to peace undaunted by those with short vision on both sides, who are bent on ruining peace. The majority are for peace and we hope the voice of peace will silence the other voices so that the future will be brighter for all."

Netanyahu told he could be indicted

(Continued from page 1)

by someone trying to make the prime minister look guilty.

Mr. Netanyahu may be implicated on breach of trust charges, according to police officials quoted by Yediot.

After questioning the prime minister, investigators told Yediot they had a "bad taste" about his involvement.

The case against certain suspects in the affair was strengthened after a meeting Thursday between state

prosecutor Edna Arbel and investigators in which they went over a recorded tape of Mr. Netanyahu's testimony to police.

Mr. Netanyahu, Mr. Deri and Mr. Bar-On have denied the allegations.

But police sources told the paper they had enough information from officials other than Mr. Avi-Yitzhak to implicate Mr. Deri.

Investigators also were looking into the possibility that Mr. Hanegbi misled ministers in presenting Mr. Bar-On for nomination.

Mr. Avi-Yitzhak earlier

this week quit his job as chief of Mr. Deri's bribery case in the midst of furious mud-slinging between him and the Shas leader over who may have been responsible for recommending Mr. Bar-On's appointment.

Those questioned in the affair include Mr. Hanegbi, Mr. Netanyahu's chief-of-staff Avigdor Lieberman, cabinet secretary Danny Naveh, and several lawyers who represent government officials.



ALBRIGHT IN MOSCOW: U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright chats with Russian children during a walk around the Kremlin compound on Friday (see story on page 1) (AFP photo)

Iran and Kuwait could start talks on sea border

KUWAIT (R) — Iran's oil minister on Saturday starts an official visit to Kuwait during which the two sides could start border talks on oil-rich northern Gulf waters.

"We expect, especially during the visit of his excellency the oil minister (Gholamreza Aghazadeh) the first negotiations between the two sides in this field" to start, Iran's ambassador to Kuwait, Gholamali Sanati, told Reuters.

"The sea borders are not clear at all...There is oil under all these waters...riches from God," he said through an Arabic translator of the narrow waterway where economic exclusion zones and other sea borders could overlap.

The visiting minister is not expected to get involved in technical border negotiations which are assigned to the legal departments of the foreign ministries of Kuwait and Iran.

But the two oil ministries are very interested in the issue because they are in charge of oil explorations. Both sides have oil drilling rigs operating in the northern Gulf, Mr. Sanati added.

Iran has a coastline along the entire Gulf waterway which its shares with Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates, Oman and Bahrain. Iraq, at the northwest tip of the Gulf, also has access.

"Kuwait would like to first finish talks with the Saudi side then negotiate with Iran to identify the continental shelf. Once the continental shelf is identified from Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Iran is identified we can start discussing with Kuwait," Mr. Sanati said.

"I believe they have reached results in their talks with Saudi Arabia and I think a company has been picked for land and sea demarcations...from the side of the Islamic republic we are fully willing to discuss this."

Gore became president for five minutes

WASHINGTON (AFP) — U.S. Vice-President Al Gore revealed on Friday that for purely technical reasons he was president of the United States last month, adding jokingly that his brief term was marked by peace in the country and the world. At the swearing-in ceremony here for Transport Secretary Rodney Slater, Mr. Gore explained that he took the oath of office on Jan. 20 at 11:59 a.m. (1659 GMT), one minute before his term as president of the United States expired. Another five minutes passed before Mr. Clinton took his oath in the ceremony on the steps of Congress. "Some of the lawyers did say that for five minutes I was president of the United States of America," Mr. Gore said. "It was an important time for me, for my family and, if I may be so bold, for America..." of the Capitol through the whole administration." Mr. Gore concluded.

Slain Egypt Christians may have visited Israel

ASSIUT (Agencies) — Police in southern Egypt may have found a motive for the massacre of 10 Christian youths by suspected anti-government militants after investigations showed that many of them had visited Israel, security sources said on Thursday.

Six gunmen shocked Egypt last week when they stormed a church in Abu Qurqas town and sprayed bullets into a youth meeting. Police believe they belong to the militant Al Gamaa Al Islamiyah (Islamic Group).

The father of Adel Mikhail Abdul Malak, one of the youths killed in the attack, told reporters on Thursday that his son had worked in

Israel for five months as had some of the others shot dead inside the church.

Southern police officials confirmed that some of the youths had spent several months in Israel and said this fact had added "another dimension" to the incident.

A spokesman for the Interior Ministry in Cairo, however, said they did not have any idea about an Israeli connection.

Militants have often targeted policemen and sometimes Christians in their attempt to transform Egypt into a strict Islamic state but security sources said that this was the first time that gunmen attacked the interior of a church.

Oral sex without intercourse declared illegal in Singapore

SINGAPORE (AFP) — A Singapore appeals court has ruled oral sex is illegal in the island state unless it is as a prelude to full heterosexual intercourse, the Straits Times reported Friday.

The ruling was handed down Thursday after state prosecutors appealed against the acquittal of a 47-year-old man in September by a trial judge who threw out a case stemming from a complaint by a 19-year-old woman he had seduced into performing oral sex.

It was the latest twist in a long-running legal debate over the meaning of an 1871 law, enforced when the island was under British colonial rule, prohibiting "carnal intercourse against the order of nature."

This is understood to cover such acts as bestiality and sodomy, for which the maximum penalty is life imprisonment. The debate has been over whether oral sex falls under the law's definition of prohibited acts.

The three-judge appeals

court declared "only the coitus of the male and female sexual organs" constitutes natural sexual intercourse. But it agreed some "unnatural acts" had a role to play in natural intercourse.

"It is a fact of life in humans as well as in animals that, before the act of copulation takes place, there is foreplay to stimulate the sex organ. Kissing is the most common, although there are several others," Justice M. Karthigesu said in the judgement.

He said there was statistical evidence Singaporeans engaged in oral sex but ruled that when such an act is used as a substitute for normal sex, consent does not prevent it from being an offence, the Straits Times said.

The ruling stemmed from the case of technician Kwan Kwong Weng, 47, who was acquitted in September after a trial judge ruled he did not violate the law when he made a consenting 19-year-old woman perform oral sex on him.

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Jordan, Israel disagree over joint airport

AMMAN (R) — Negotiations between Jordan and Israel on building a joint airport near the Red Sea coast hit a deadlock on Thursday over Israeli security concerns, a Jordanian official said.

"They want a terminal inside Jordanian territory to be under their control but this is unacceptable. It is not possible to give up Jordanian territory," said a Jordanian official close to the talks which were held in Jordan's Red Sea port of Aqaba.

The idea of the joint airport was to ease congestion at Israel's Eilat airport, which is nine kilometres north of Aqaba airport, and help Jordan tap new traffic through a newly built passenger terminal close to it and an expanded runway.

U.S. Lockheed Martin had completed last July a feasibility study for a proposed \$80 million international airport serving Aqaba in Jordan and Eilat in Israel.

But Israeli transport officials presented their Jordanian counterparts with new radically modified proposals which undermined the project's principle, the official told Reuters.

"They presented us with a proposal that demolishes the Lockheed terms of reference... They want a solution that solves their technical problems at our expense," the official said.

A decision on the new Israeli proposals would be taken at a higher political level, he added.

The planned airport is one of several joint projects approved in the spirit of optimistic cooperation which followed a 1994 peace treaty between Jordan and Israel.

Officials say Israel's enthusiasm for the project, which was agreed to and strongly supported by the previous Labour government, appeared to wane after a rightwing government came to power in Israel last year.

Israeli officials, who say that they are not opposed to the airport plan in principle, however expressed fears it could be an expensive political gesture rather than a viable commercial venture.

Jordan mulls big stock market sell-off

By Suleiman Al Khalidi
Reuters

AMMAN — Jordan's stock market is advising the government on plans for a major state sell-off of its extensive stock portfolio as part of a stepped up privatisation effort, its director has said.

"The government is now consulting the Amman Financial Market on technical procedures for unloading further investments... we will be giving them some ideas," Wahib Al Shair, director-general of the Amman Financial Market (AFM), told Reuters.

"We also know the government is considering unloading some or much of its holdings in the market... this ought to provide a larger float for the interested investors," Mr. Shair added.

A key element in Jordan's so far slow privatisation effort is state sell-offs of the government's extensive stock holdings — nearly 35 per cent of the bourse's total market capitalisation of 3.5 billion dinars.

Stakes in over 60 out of 135 listed stocks held by its investment arm and state pension funds range from minimal shareholdings in hardly traded firms to a 69.3 per cent of blue chip Jordan Phosphate Mines.

Mr. Shair said AFM would enlist international

financial expertise on ways of offloading sizeable government holdings.

"We would like to enlist the expertise available abroad... we do not want to reinvent the wheel," he said.

Mr. Shair said a government move to implement in 1997 its privatisation pledge, an essential component of IMF-directed economic reforms, will give the market a major boost.

"The commitment has not changed, it's the implementation... I see the government moving ahead faster than last year... there is certainly activity towards more privatisation," said Mr. Shair, who is also a member of a top privatisation body headed by the prime minister that formulates policy.

Mr. Shair said foreign funds were looking for signs of progress no Jordan's privatisation before they could be enticed into further investment.

He said foreigners who complain of a lack of stock availability will see more depth to the market after state sell-offs, and listings of 15 newly-established firms which he expected to take place later this year.

Funds say with one third of the market already held by mostly Arab investors and a 50 per cent foreign ownership ceiling there is insufficient supply of popu-

lar bluechips.

Global funds' stake on the bourse stood at end of 1996 at just 1.5 per cent of the market's capitalisation against 33 per cent held by non-Jordanian Arab investors.

The rest is held by the government and Jordanian investors.

Mr. Shair said the new firms, with a combined 60 million to 80 million dinar (\$100 million-\$110 million) capital, would bring the number of listed firms in the combined official and parallel markets to 150 by year end.

Mr. Shair said he was

encouraged by a trend in foreign purchases of bluechips which is showing signs of picking up.

"Every month, foreign funds are increasing their purchases... it is certainly continuous and persistent, although not snowballing, and we are still speaking of small numbers," he pointed out.

Jordanian investment managers are saying Middle East funds, which include Jordan as a main component, and global funds have been increasing their activity since December.

Mr. Shair said he was hopeful that state sell-offs

and healthy corporate earnings forecasts would help the market's performance in 1997 surpass last year's disappointing falls.

A new companies law which encourages capital hikes and a new securities law that brings major internal reforms along with automated trading will raise the market's investor profile.

"During the last ten weeks the market has gone up by about eight per cent and average daily volume has doubled... and also we are hearing that companies are reporting better profits," he said.

REUTERS REUTERS

The Business of Information

| Major Currencies & Cross Rates | | | | | | | | | |
|--------------------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|---------|--------|---------|---------|--------|
| Currency | USD | DEM | GBP | CHF | JPY | CAD | ITL | NLG | FRF |
| US Dollar | 1.0000 | 1.6667 | 0.6936 | 0.7564 | 121.19 | 1.3620 | 1667.90 | 1.8360 | 5.7000 |
| DE Mark | 0.5921 | 1.0000 | 0.3661 | 0.8711 | 72.96 | 0.8060 | 967.57 | 1.1250 | 3.3760 |
| GB Sterling | 1.6184 | 2.7225 | 1.0000 | 2.3787 | 198.67 | 2.2002 | 2695.83 | 3.0894 | 9.2129 |
| CH Franc | 0.6797 | 1.1488 | 0.4203 | 1.0000 | 83.70 | 0.8250 | 1133.47 | 128.79 | 3.8729 |
| JP Yen | 0.0081 | 1.3699 | 0.5019 | 1.1935 | 1.0000 | 1.1047 | 13.54 | 154.03 | 4.6249 |
| CA Dollar | 0.7342 | 1.2390 | 0.4536 | 1.0797 | 1.10 | 1.0000 | 1224.56 | 1.3924 | 4.1825 |
| IT Lira | 0.0006 | 1.0105 | 0.3703 | 0.0881 | 1357.04 | 0.8151 | 1.0000 | 11.36 | 3.4123 |
| NL Guilder | 0.2286 | 0.8824 | 0.3257 | 0.7747 | 64.83 | 0.7168 | 378.68 | 1.0000 | 3.6011 |
| FR Franc | 0.1754 | 0.2960 | 0.1085 | 0.2576 | 21.58 | 0.2387 | 33.29 | 33.2900 | 1.0000 |

| Energy | | |
|--------|--------|----------|
| Oil | Last | Previous |
| Brent | 20.65 | 21.00 |
| WTI | 21.45 | 21.90 |
| Bony | 20.85 | 21.00 |
| Dubai | 17.95 | 18.80 |
| UL Gas | 199.00 | 200.00 |

| Mid-East Currencies | | | | | |
|---------------------|--------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Currency | USD | DEM | GBP | CHF | JPY |
| SA Riyal | 0.2666 | 0.4505 | 0.16508 | 0.39263 | 32.8742 |
| AE Dirham | 0.2725 | 0.46036 | 0.1667 | 0.40117 | 33.5942 |
| KW Dinar | 3.2971 | 5.57103 | 2.04123 | 4.85437 | 406.504 |
| BR Dinar | 0.3770 | 0.48229 | 1.64231 | 2.90472 | 327.011 |
| CY Pound | 1.9747 | 3.3334 | 1.2212 | 2.9043 | 243.14 |

| Metal Prices | | |
|-----------------|-------|-------|
| Metal | Bid | Offer |
| Gold (oz's) | 352.4 | 352.9 |
| Silver (oz's) | 5.22 | 5.24 |
| Platinum (oz's) | 370.2 | 371.2 |
| AL (3 Months) | #N/A | #N/A |
| CU (3 Months) | #N/A | #N/A |
| Zinc (3 Months) | #N/A | #N/A |
| Lead (3 Months) | #N/A | #N/A |
| NI (3 Months) | #N/A | #N/A |

| Currency Deposit Rates (Bid) | | | | | |
|------------------------------|-------|--------|--------|--------|------|
| Cncy | Month | Months | Months | Months | Year |
| USD | 5.25 | 5.34 | 5.50 | 5.56 | 5.68 |
| GBP | 6.08 | 6.06 | 6.16 | 6.31 | 6.43 |
| JPY | 0.38 | 0.35 | 0.35 | 0.33 | 0.40 |
| DEM | 3.06 | 3.06 | 3.06 | 3.12 | 3.12 |
| FRF | 3.21 | 3.24 | 3.26 | 3.29 | 3.30 |
| CHF | 1.50 | 1.50 | 1.58 | 1.50 | 1.53 |
| ITL | 7.30 | 7.12 | 6.87 | 6.75 | 6.61 |

| Main Equity Indices | | | | | |
|---------------------|------------|----------|--------|--------|---------|
| Bourse | Index | Value | Chng | % Chng | High |
| New York | DOW JONES | 6929.31 | 1.93 | 0.03 | 6950.86 |
| New York | S&P 500 | 803.33 | 0.52 | 0.07 | 804.94 |
| London | FT-SE 100 | 4336.8 | -19.3 | -0.44 | 4349 |
| Tokyo | NIKKEI 225 | 19034.66 | -17.17 | -0.09 | 19173.5 |
| Paris | CAC 40 | 2582.84 | -12.4 | -0.48 | 2595.81 |
| Frankfurt | DAX | 3164.09 | -11.94 | -0.37 | 3190.46 |

| Energy | | |
|---------------|--------|----------|
| Commodity | Last | Delivery |
| Coffee (c/lb) | 174.17 | Spot |
| Cocoa (c/lb) | 174.17 | Spot |
| Sugar (c/lb) | 314 | Spot |
| Wheat (c/lb) | 134 | Spot |
| Soy (c/lb) | 22.51 | Spot |
| Yell (c/lb) | 117 | Spot |
| Barley (c/lb) | 2.31 | Spot |
| Rice (c/lb) | 470 | Spot |

| JOD Cross Rates | | |
|-----------------|--------|--------|
| Currency | Buy | Sell |
| US Dollar | 0.708 | 0.710 |
| GB Sterling | 1.1449 | 1.1502 |
| DE Mark | 0.4178 | 0.4199 |
| FR Franc | 0.4792 | 0.4808 |
| CH Franc | 0.1238 | 0.1244 |
| JP Yen | 0.5714 | 0.5743 |
| NL Guilder | 0.3721 | 0.374 |
| IT Lira | 0.4192 | 0.4213 |

* Source: Central Bank of Jordan.

Abu Shakra Trading Agency Launches Black Pearls From Elizabeth Taylor

Elizabeth Taylor as a business woman, she has launched a phenomenally successful line of fragrance, including her newest fragrance, Black Pearls.

Mr. Rami Abu Shakra the General Manager of Abu Shakra Trading Agency presented to the Jordanian market this new perfume Black Pearls by saying that:

From the depths of the seas comes the inspiration for Black Pearls, a soft sensuous, modern oriental fragrance.

Black Pearls value derives from the rareness of their occurrence... the delicacy of their creation... the struggle to find and retrieve them... the exquisite beauty they bring to the life of whoever wears them. Every Pearls is unique



because each has a story to tell. For the woman who wears such a gem, it speaks with the memory of exotic oceans. It murmurs with the fascination of distant longings.

Only Elizabeth Taylor could have created such a fragrance. Sensuous and unique, Elizabeth Taylor Black Pearls.

Spain offers \$300m in aid to Egypt

CAIRO (AFP) — Spain has offered \$300 million in financial assistance to Egypt over the next three years.

Spanish secretary of state for trade and tourism, Jose Manuel Norniella, has said.

Mr. Norniella, who made the announcement during an official visit to Egypt by Spain's King Juan Carlos, said the aid was intended to finance joint projects to be carried out by Spanish companies.

The aid will be split equally into commercial and concessional credits under a protocol to be signed shortly, Mr. Norniella said.

King Juan Carlos told Egyptian and Spanish businessmen that he believed "a

lot more can be achieved in the field of trade" between the two countries.

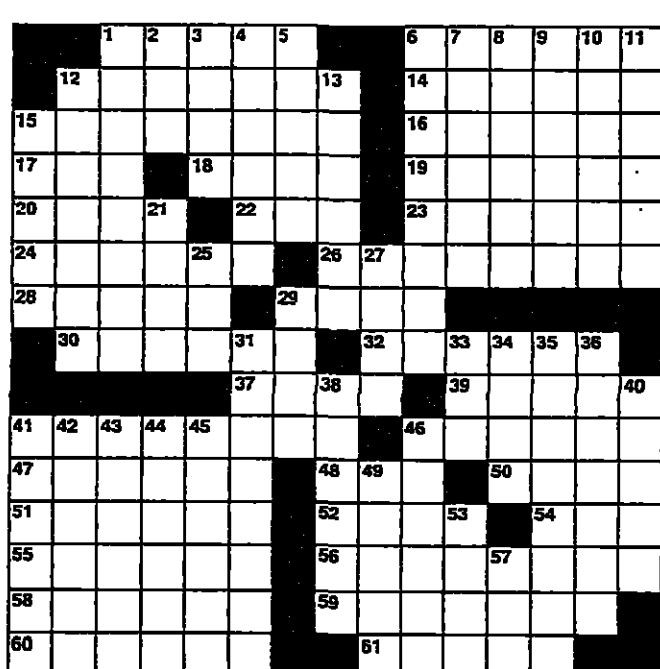
"Numerous opportunities still exist in the food and agriculture, public works engineering, alternative energy, tourism and other sectors that have not been sufficiently explored," the monarch said.

Egyptian Prime Minister Kamal Al Ganzouri said that while Europe accounted for 40 per cent of Egypt's worldwide trade, Spain represented only two per cent.

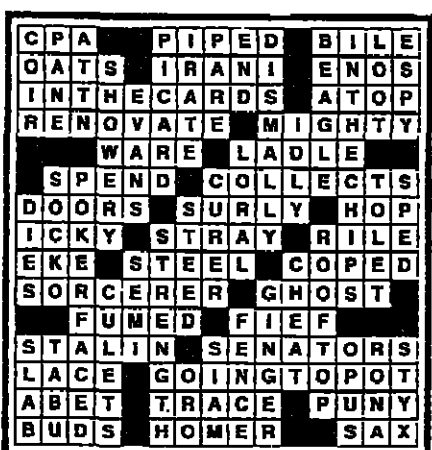
The volume of trade between Egypt and Spain reached \$500 million in 1996, including \$300 million worth of Spanish exports.

THE Daily Crossword

- ACROSS
- By and by
 - Power tool
 - Entertained lavishly
 - Supervised release
 - Drink
 - Sub-molecular
 - Unreturnable
 - Depots: abbr.
 - Fabricated again
 - Tender
 - Yale student
 - Exchanges
 - Circumvented
 - Appraise once more
 - Painter of ballet dances
 - Shore bird
 - Cure
 - Digressions
 - Cupid
 - Clocked
 - Sweet wine
 - Hard cheese
 - Nook
 - Anger
 - Crisp cookie
 - Ladder rungs
 - Suffrage
 - Consumed
 - Mum
 - Educated
 - Surface
 - Spanish gentlemen
 - Talked back
 - Caesar, e.g.
- DOWN
- Positional advantage
 - Ripen
 - Sailors
 - Walking on air
 - Dignified
 - Athenian neighbors?
 - Those who loathe
 - Bouquets
 - Barbantine
 - Slurs over a syllable
 - School break
 - Recuperate
 - Under the Elms
 - Founded
 - Cheese
 - Natives of: suff.
 - 27 Ages
 - Phoenician city
 - Loathed
 - Japanese statesman
 - Darkens
 - Radiated
 - Legislative bodies
 - Mount of Jerusalem
 - Figured
 - Hoi polloi
 - Word's last syllable
 - Weighing devices
 - Quilt and comforter
 - Get even for
 - Eye part
 - Functions
 - 53 EPA concern: abbr.
 - Nest egg



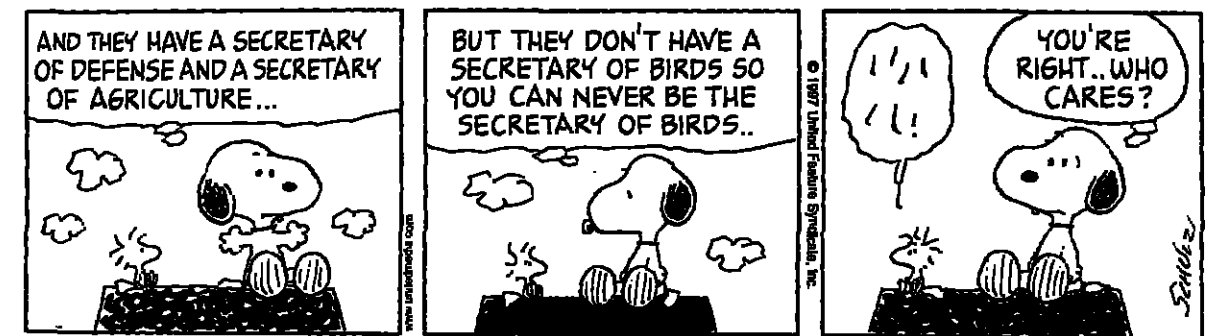
by Roger Jurgovan



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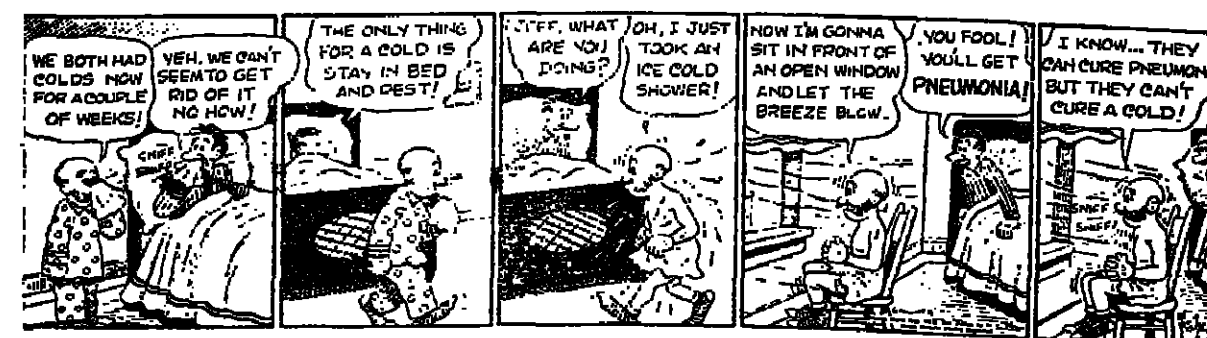
Peanuts



Andy Capp



Mutt'n'Jeff



HOROSCOPE FORECAST FOR SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 22, 1997

By Thomas S. Pison,
Astrologer, Curroll
Righter Foundation

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Get into some entertainment today which you've enjoyed previously however have forgotten about for some time. Drive very carefully later this evening so that you don't get into any difficulty while on the highway.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) If you apply yourself, you can easily get rid of confusion at home today and make it a much happier place. Invite guests in for the evening and you can have a wonderful time by being in their company.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) Your allies will be more cooperative today if they understand your motives and your goals. Accept a favour later this evening from an outsider who likes you and you can become quite successful from this encounter.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) If you append some modern methods today to those which are conventional, you can be more successful in the days ahead. Try to build up your bank account, so that you can have sufficient funds for the lean times.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) Leave your home early today, and get a great deal accomplished with your career activities. Indulge yourself with some intelligent and relaxing conversation later this evening with your loved ones and thereby this can be special.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) Some great ideas will come to you today which will be productive towards your career activities. This hasn't happened for some time, so be sure to quickly use them to your advantage for the days ahead.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Don't take any risks today where your health is concerned and thereby you can be happy. Stay around good friends who support you, and later this evening you can increase your popularity so that you can be successful.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) Attempt to remedy a confusing situation today which has been impeding your progress and getting recognised by those in authority. A superior, if made aware of your abilities later this evening, can help you.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Be wide awake today to any new and exciting opportunities which could advance your career activities. Treat new contacts nicely and you'll profit from your efforts in many ways which you truly didn't expect.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) Work on getting all of your business affairs in order today, so that you can have everything in place. Some special though for your mate later this evening will make both much happier and more respectful of each other.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) Today is the time that you have some time to handle those projects which you can't get to during the week. Dive into them head first and thereby you can make your dreams possible. Later this evening will be good to go out.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) Take time today to make your surroundings more comfortable and charming for your loved ones and special guests. Labour on coming to an understanding with a fellow associate who will be quite beneficial.

Birthstone of February: Amethyst — Onyx.

Business
Continued
interest
and pri

By a Jordan Times
Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Jordanian business leaders today said they were not discouraged by the government's decision to sell off state-owned enterprises.

They said the government's decision to sell off state-owned enterprises was a necessary step to improve the country's economic situation.

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Continued investor interest keeps trading and prices at AFM steady

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Trading and prices remained largely steady at the stock market this week on continued investor interest after the government lifted a capitalisation tax, brokers said Friday.

The weekly report of the Amman Financial Market (AFM), said turnover for the week ending Thursday was 5.8 million dinars compared with the previous week's 5.4 million dinars.

The report said 3.1 million shares changed hands under 3,525 deals concluded during the week, with average daily trading at 1.16 million dinars compared with the previous week's 1.068 million dinars.

The official AFM share

price index based on 60 major companies closed at 156.29 points, down 0.95 points or 0.6 per cent from the week's opening of 157.24 points, the report said.

Commercial banks and financial institutions accounted for 2.67 million dinars of the week's trading volume, followed by industrials with 2.28 million, services sector firms with 860,000 dinars and insurance companies with 2,700 dinars.

Sectoral indices showed commercial banks and investment houses gaining 1.8 per cent, service sector firms 0.5 per cent and insurance companies 0.33 per cent. Industrials dipped by 0.2 per cent, the AFM report said.

Stocks of 81 companies were involved in the

week's business, with 19 of them closing with gains, 45 losing and 17 remaining unchanged.

Dealers said investor enthusiasm also remained high after continued contacts between the Jordanian and the Iraqi governments as well as private sector negotiations on orders under Iraq's oil-for-food deal with the U.N. as well as independent contractors.

But keeping the spirits high was the removal of a 15 per cent capitalisation tax on reserves and profits converted into capital.

Several banks and industrials are expected to announce capital increases soon by converting reserves and profits to shareholdings.

Palestinian brokerage houses flooded with business

TEL AVIV (R) — Businessmen have flooded Palestinian brokerage houses with inquiries on investing in the first Palestinian stock market in the West Bank, a day after it opened for limited trading, traders said.

Jamal Aladdin, general manager of the Jordan and Palestine Financial Investment Company, said investors from Jordan and Israel as well as several prominent West Bank Palestinian businessmen visited his firm or phoned to inquire about investment prospects.

"Since last night, we have been getting many calls from local Palestinian investors as well as from Jordan and from Israel inquiring on the possibility of investing," Mr. Aladdin told Reuters.

Traders said the interest was partly motivated out of eagerness on the part of expatriate Palestinians to participate in building the economy of the West Bank and Gaza Strip and partly out of pure business interests.

"The inquiries bode very well for the success of the exchange, especially in

view of the calls from outside our homeland," Mr. Aladdin said.

The Palestine Securities Exchange (PSE) opened for limited trading in the town of Nablus on Tuesday, where several transactions took place. Officials said the exchange, which had listed 23 companies, would start with one trading session per week until trading volume builds up.

"All the signs point to a positive start," said Jiries Qassis, general manager of the Ramallah-based United Securities Company. "Everybody is eager to see an organised market that would provide real values for the shares," he added.

Four brokerage firms were accredited to the exchange, a fully-electronic market which was designed to attract foreign capital and provide an alternative to common forms of investment such as bank deposits and real estate.

Traders said top investors in the Jordanian stock exchange as well as some brokerage firms

have also expressed interest in the Palestinian bourse.

Hamadi Al Barghouti, a major investor on the Amman Stock Exchange, praised the management of the PSE and predicted success for the venture.



"I am confident that the exchange will be the best one in the whole Middle East. It has come at the right time," Mr. Barghouti told Reuters.

He said he expected more than 100 accounts to be opened with his firm during the first week and that many callers had already expressed interest in trading.

Mr. Qassis said he was encouraged by the Palestinian finance minister's comments on Tuesday that the Palestinian National Authority plans to make it compulsory for joint-stock companies to list on the stock exchange.

Israel's mass-circulating Yedioth Ahronoth, in an editorial, welcomed the opening of the exchange as an "important economic event."

"The Nablus stock exchange is doubly symbolic: A symbol of Palestinian economic autonomy and a symbol of an economic and social regime based upon private ownership, free enterprise and market forces," the newspaper said.

| AMMAN FINANCIAL MARKET HOUSING BANK CREDIT - EQUITABLE TELEPHONE: 607171 / 607172 ORGANIZED MARKET TRADING ACTIVITY FOR THE PERIOD (15/02/1997 - 19/02/1997) WEEKLY REPORT | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |  |
|--|---------|------------------------------|-------|-------|------------------|-------------------------|-----------------|---------------|--------|--------|---------------|--------|----------------------|-----------------|---|
| DURING THE LAST 5 WEEKS | | COMPANY NAME | P/E | DIV | NO. OF CONTRACTS | NO. OF SHARES EXERCISED | VALUE TRADED JD | OPENING PRICE | HIGH | LOW | CLOSING PRICE | CHANGE | AVERAGE MARKET PRICE | TURNOVER SHARES | NO. OF TRADING DAYS |
| 255.000 | 255.500 | ARAB BANK | 14.3 | 1.34 | 31 | 5020 | 1212970 | 263.90 | 266.00 | 260.00 | 262.00 | -1.50 | 261.548 | 114 | 5 |
| 5.000 | 4.900 | CAIRO AMMAN BANK | 10.3 | 0.00 | 155 | 212706 | 443695 | 5.00 | 5.10 | 5.00 | 5.00 | -0.11 | 5.096 | 506 | 4 |
| 3.350 | 3.120 | BANK OF JORDAN | 11.7 | 0.00 | 39 | 54607 | 185355 | 3.35 | 3.44 | 3.23 | 3.23 | -0.12 | 3.394 | 146 | 2 |
| 2.480 | 2.300 | INDUSTRIAL INV. BK. | 5.3 | 5.97 | 26 | 28400 | 46991 | 2.46 | 2.45 | 2.33 | 2.33 | -0.13 | 2.359 | 261 | 5 |
| 4.900 | 4.670 | THE HOUSING BK. | 12.6 | 2.93 | 65 | 82580 | 399956 | 4.90 | 4.92 | 4.71 | 4.71 | -0.19 | 4.84 | 230 | 4 |
| 2.800 | 2.670 | JOR. INVEST. BANK | 20.1 | 0.00 | 45 | 22370 | 61804 | 2.79 | 2.83 | 2.73 | 2.77 | -0.02 | 2.786 | 224 | 5 |
| 1.970 | 1.950 | JOR. GROUP BANK | 5.4 | 7.78 | 43 | 59157 | 56213 | 1.96 | 1.98 | 1.90 | 1.90 | -0.06 | 1.94 | 296 | 5 |
| 4.000 | 3.730 | JOR. SECURITIES BANK | 18.5 | 0.00 | 52 | 9241 | 38921 | 4.00 | 4.05 | 3.86 | 3.86 | -0.14 | 3.994 | 103 | 4 |
| 3.590 | 3.370 | JOR. INV. FUND BANK | 10.3 | 0.00 | 7 | 1016 | 3423 | 3.37 | 3.38 | 3.27 | 3.28 | -0.11 | 3.349 | 101 | 2 |
| 1.620 | 1.600 | RENTAL-HAL (SEITRA) | 1.0 | 9.38 | 6 | 1800 | 1613 | 1.62 | 1.62 | 1.60 | 1.60 | -0.02 | 1.612 | 105 | 2 |
| 4.650 | 4.650 | ARAB BANKING CO. | 24.6 | 0.00 | 3 | 519 | 2459 | 4.65 | 4.75 | 4.75 | 4.75 | -0.10 | 4.733 | 100 | 5 |
| 1.300 | 1.190 | PHILADELPHIA INV. BK. | - | 0.00 | 15 | 18286 | 22893 | 1.20 | 1.20 | 1.18 | 1.20 | -0.02 | 1.197 | 103 | 3 |
| BANK & SEC. SECTOR | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | CHANGE: -0.51% |
| 1.950 | 1.920 | JOR. FARMER INSUR. | 5.5 | 10.31 | 8 | 1050 | 2081 | 1.94 | 2.00 | 1.94 | 1.94 | -0.06 | 1.982 | 104 | 4 |
| 2.100 | 2.100 | WEST LAND INSUR. | 6.5 | 0.00 | 2 | 300 | 660 | 2.10 | 2.20 | 2.20 | 2.20 | -0.10 | 2.200 | 103 | 1 |
| INSURANCE SECTOR | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | CHANGE: -0.18% |
| 1.660 | 1.590 | JOR. ELECTRIC PWR. | 11.6 | 7.19 | 75 | 40487 | 103381 | 1.65 | 1.68 | 1.66 | 1.67 | -0.02 | 1.670 | 105 | 5 |
| 8.250 | 8.250 | JOR. HOTEL TOURISM | 17.2 | 2.06 | 6 | 2806 | 23648 | 8.25 | 8.00 | 8.00 | 8.00 | -0.25 | 8.000 | 105 | 2 |
| 7.500 | 1.450 | IBRD ELECTRICITY | 9.5 | 6.90 | 4 | 1100 | 1596 | 1.45 | 1.46 | 1.45 | 1.45 | -0.01 | 1.47 | 103 | 1 |
| 4.650 | 4.350 | ARAB TRAVEL HOTELS | 17.5 | 2.90 | 1 | 400 | 1748 | 4.65 | 4.62 | 4.42 | 4.42 | -0.23 | 4.47 | 100 | 3 |
| 2.460 | 2.460 | SHIPPING LINES | 10.4 | 8.13 | 9 | 3461 | 8496 | 2.42 | 2.42 | 2.45 | 2.46 | -0.06 | 2.431 | 105 | 4 |
| 1.280 | 1.170 | RAIL. PORTFOLIO | 0.00 | 0.00 | 139 | 117800 | 151239 | 1.29 | 1.33 | 1.23 | 1.24 | -0.05 | 1.284 | 2356 | 5 |
| 1.960 | 1.870 | REAL ESTATE INV. | 21.1 | 3.92 | 28 | 23450 | 22317 | 1.86 | 1.88 | 1.85 | 1.85 | -0.01 | 1.852 | 107 | 4 |
| 1.680 | 1.680 | JORDAN INTL. TRAD. | 32.9 | 0.00 | 3 | 2400 | 1535 | 1.64 | 1.64 | 1.63 | 1.64 | -0.01 | 1.641 | 107 | 1 |
| 1.530 | 1.520 | MID. EAST HOTELS | 64.6 | 0.00 | 1 | 2750 | 4125 | 1.53 | 1.50 | 1.50 | 1.50 | -0.03 | 1.500 | 104 | 3 |
| 3.620 | 3.450 | ARAB TRAVEL INV. EDUC. | 13.7 | 0.00 | 18 | 2925 | 10174 | 3.50 | 3.55 | 3.44 | 3.47 | -0.03 | 3.471 | 108 | 4 |
| 1.080 | 1.040 | RAMLA EDUCATION | - | 0.00 | 7 | 1800 | 9247 | 1.08 | 1.07 | 1.05 | 1.05 | -0.03 | 1.051 | 106 | 4 |
| 2.140 | 2.090 | UNITED CO. | 10.6 | 4.98 | 138 | 87672 | 180454 | 2.14 | 2.15 | 2.00 | 2.01 | -0.13 | 2.058 | 1753 | 5 |
| 1.850 | 1.830 | UNION LAND DEV. | - | 0.00 | 21 | 14250 | 11678 | 1.83 | 1.84 | 1.81 | 1.81 | -0.02 | 1.820 | 285 | 5 |
| SERVICES SECTOR | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | CHANGE: -1.18% |
| 1.000 | 1.000 | ATTACHMENT | - | 0.00 | 3 | 6000 | 5735 | 1.00 | 1.00 | 1.00 | 1.00 | -0.01 | 1.000 | 104 | 2 |
| 3.400 | 3.370 | JOR. CEMENT FACT. | 19.7 | 2.91 | 92 | 26084 | 106440 | 3.48 | 3.50 | 3.44 | 3.44 | -0.04 | 3.475 | 104 | 5 |
| 3.400 | 3.270 | JOR. PHOSPHATE MINES | 36.0 | 0.00 | 14 | 4984 | 16813 | 3.40 | 3.38 | 3.35 | 3.35 | -0.05 | 3.373 | 103 | 3 |
| 6.000 | 5.900 | ARAB POTASH CO. | 18.2 | 0.00 | 40 | 21392 | 130018 | 6.00 | 6.10 | 6.00 | 6.00 | -0.10 | 6.078 | 103 | 5 |
| 10.010 | 9.870 | JOR. PETROL. REFINERY | 10.1 | 0.00 | 56 | 11442 | 114558 | 10.01 | 10.05 | 10.00 | 10.00 | -0.01 | 10.017 | 179 | 5 |
| 6.250 | 6.250 | JORDAN TANNING | 6.7 | 5.76 | 1 | 150 | 938 | 6.25 | 6.25 | 6.25 | 6.25 | -0.01 | 6.25 | 105 | 1 |
| 1.290 | 1.240 | WOOLLEN INDUSTRIES | 57.0 | 0.00 | 58 | 22950 | 30232 | 1.29 | 1.35 | 1.29 | 1.30 | -0.01 | 1.311 | 2295 | 5 |
| 2.790 | 2.500 | INDUSTRIAL COMM. BLDG. | 35.9 | 0.00 | 67 | 17758 | 40250 | 2.79 | 2.89 | 2.67 | 2.67 | -0.12 | 2.771 | 355 | 5 |
| 7.000 | 6.950 | JOR. WOODSTOCK MILLS | 8.9 | 3.59 | 4 | 1300 | 15999 | 7.00 | 6.97 | 6.95 | 6.96 | -0.04 | 6.956 | 108 | 3 |
| 3.880 | 3.690 | ARAB FARM. BANK | 20.6 | 5.32 | 193 | 62975 | 244835 | 3.67 | 3.95 | 3.72 | 3.76 | -0.11 | 3.887 | 700 | 5 |
| 6.770 | 6.270 | JOR. CERAMIC IND. | 9.0 | 3.47 | 16 | 8750 | 62568 | 6.27 | 7.25 | 6.90 | 7.20 | -0.07 | 7.151 | 350 | 4 |
| 3.620 | 3.220 | JORDAN TANNING | 13.8 | 6.27 | 4 | 260 | 581 | 3.22 | 3.25 | 3.22 | 3.25 | -0.03 | 3.211 | 105 | 1 |
| 1.600 | 1.600 | JOR. STEEL INDUST. | 7.0 | 7.36 | 4 | 1250 | 1028 | 1.60 | 1.63 | 1.61 | 1.63 | -0.03 | 1.621 | 103 | 1 |
| 2.620 | 2.620 | GENERAL KITEING | 6.4 | 12.00 | 2 | 800 | 2000 | 2.62 | 2.60 | 2.50 | 2.50 | -0.12 | 2.500 | 100 | 2 |
| 1.350 | 1.350 | RAPIA INDUSTRIES | 169.6 | 0.00 | 1 | 1000 | 1340 | 1.35 | 1.34 | 1.34 | 1.34 | -0.01 | 1.340 | 100 | 1 |
| 4.940 | 4.600 | DAR ALMAJMA DV. INV. | 13.4 | 4.08 | 61 | 44250 | 232865 | 4.94 | 5.10 | 4.85 | 4.80 | -0.04 | 5.026 | 773 | 5 |
| 3.600 | 3.500 | ARAB ALUM. IND. | 8.8 | 0.00 | 2 | 450 | 1598 | 3.50 | 3.55 | 3.55 | 3.55 | -0.05 | 3.551 | 100 | 1 |
| 1.630 | 1.590 | LIVESTOCK & POULTRY | - | 0.00 | 86 | 117700 | 70407 | 1.61 | 1.62 | 1.59 | 1.60 | -0.01 | 1.600 | 567 | 5 |
| 1.220 | 1.190 | ARAB PAPER CORP. LTD. | 7.9 | 8.85 | 26 | 13694 | 14441 | 1.20 | 1.20 | 1.17 | 1.17 | -0.03 | 1.187 | 595 | 3 |
| 1.230 | 1.230 | NATIONAL STEEL IND. | - | 0.00 | 2 | 63 | 77 | 1.23 | 1.23 | 1.23 | 1.23 | -0.01 | 1.227 | 102 | 1 |
| 1.680 | 1.680 | NATIONAL STEEL IND. | 9.6 | 9.23 | 41 | 24692 | 14244 | 1.67 | 1.68 | 1.65 | 1.65 | -0.02 | 1.662 | 108 | 5 |
| 1.120 | 1.070 | DEVELOPED PETRO. CHM. | - | 0.00 | 27 | 7850 | 8653 | 1.11 | 1.12 | 1.06 | 1.06 | -0.05 | 1.098 | 109 | 5 |
| 1.810 | 1.790 | JOR. ROCHMOL IND. | 140.4 | 0.00 | 2 | 350 | 282 | 1.80 | 1.82 | 1.80 | 1.80 | -0.02 | 1.804 | 102 | 1 |
| 2.600 | 2.530 | UNIV. CHM. IND. | 66.1 | 0.00 | 14 | 2808 | 7209 | 2.40 | 2.40 | 2.30 | 2.30 | -0.10 | 2.367 | 107 | 4 |
| 2.460 | 2.300 | KATL. CARBON WIRE | 14.0 | 0.00 | 1 | 250 | 575 | 2.30 | 2.30 | 2.30 | 2.30 | -0.01 | 2.300 | 105 | 1 |
| 1.820 | 1.800 | JOR. SULPHO-CHM. | - | 0.00 | 2 | 750 | 988 | 1.80 | 1.79 | 1.77 | 1.77 | -0.03 | 1.784 | 109 | 2 |
| 1.820 | 1.800 | ARAB PHOSPH. CHM. | 38.5 | 0.00 | 347 | 218158 | 345469 | 1.80 | 1.81 | 1.75 | 1.75 | -0.05 | 1.774 | 103 | 5 |
| 1.740 | 1.680 | UNIV. ROCHMOL IND. | 5.2 | 11.76 | 119 | 55230 | 96342 | 1.73 | 1.80 | 1.69 | 1.70 | -0.03 | 1.744 | 103 | 5 |
| 1.380 | 1.300 | JOR. TINS. RESOURCES | 17.0 | 0.00 | 178 | 106705 | 147737 | 1.37 | 1.41 | 1.34 | 1.35 | -0.02 | 1.386 | 1334 | 5 |
| 1.950 | 1.900 | JOR. NEW CABLE CO. | 24.0 | 0.00 | 82 | 55295 | 51754 | 1.95 | 1.96 | 1.91 | 1.91 | -0.04 | 1.936 | 103 | 3 |
| 1.970 | 1.850 | KATL. CARBON WIRE | 120.2 | 0.00 | 29 | 13374 | 23397 | 1.87 | 1.90 | 1.87 | 1.87 | -0.03 | 1.893 | 206 | 4 |
| 1.280 | 1.210 | UNIV. TOBACCO | 28.9 | 0.00 | 69 | 57058 | 70555 | 1.25 | 1.26 | 1.22 | 1.23 | -0.02 | 1.237 | 107 | 5 |
| 1.030 | 1.000 | UNION CH. & VEG. | 24.9 | 0.00 | 70 | 39850 | 43421 | 1.03 | 1.05 | 1.03 | 1.01 | -0.02 | 1.039 | 103 | 5 |
| INDUSTRIAL SECTOR | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | CHANGE: -0.57% |
| GRAND TOTAL | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | CHANGE: -0.60% |
| AMMAN FINANCIAL MARKET HOUSING BANK CREDIT - EQUITABLE TELEPHONE: 607171 / 607172 ORGANIZED MARKET TRADING ACTIVITY FOR THE PERIOD (15/02/1997 - 19/02/1997) WEEKLY REPORT | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |  |
| DURING THE LAST 5 WEEKS | | COMPANY NAME | P/E | DIV | NO. OF CONTRACTS | NO. OF SHARES EXERCISED | VALUE TRADED JD | OPENING PRICE | HIGH | LOW | CLOSING PRICE | CHANGE | AVERAGE MARKET PRICE | TURNOVER SHARES | NO. OF TRADING DAYS |
| 1.520 | 1.490 | GENERAL GEN. STORAGE | 19.3 | 0.00 | 9 | 5950 | 2976 | 1.52 | 1.53 | 1.48 | 1.48 | -0.04 | 1.500 | 180 | 4 |
| 1.590 | 1.530 | JOR. TRADE FIRM | 14.4 | 0.00 | 126 | 282800 | 165408 | 1.59 | 1.61 | 1.54 | 1.54 | -0.05 | 1.585 | 6223 | 5 |
| 1.460 | 1.410 | ARAB BANK | 10.3 | 0.00 | 155 | 212706 | 443695 | 1.46 | 1.48 | 1.45 | 1.45 | -0.03 | 1.465 | 2259 | 5 |
| 1.730 | 1.720 | UNION INV. 50% | 68.9 | 0.00 | 38 | 71700 | 15774 | 1.72 | 1.72 | 1.72 | 1.72 | -0.01 | 1.720 | 326 | 3 |
| 1.680 | 1.680 | AL-DAMASTIR 75% | 15.6 | 0.00 | 16 | 100847 | 45363 | 1.68 | 1.70 | 1.68 | 1.68 | -0.02 | 1.680 | 720 | 2 |
| 1.630 | 1.600 | ARAB FOOD & MED. | - | 0.00 | 35 | 26728 | 16841 | 1.63 | 1.64 | 1.62 | 1.63 | -0.01 | 1.630 | 764 | 5 |
| 1.480 | 1.470 | ARAB TRAVEL INV. EDUC. | - | 0.00 | 59 | 93830 | 46629 | 1.47 | 1.50 | 1.48 | 1.48 | -0.01 | 1.497 | 1877 | 5 |
| 1.460 | 1.460 | JOR. SECURITIES BANK | 18.5 | 0.00 | 52 | 9241 | 38921 | 1.46 | 1.48 | 1.46 | 1.46 | -0.02 | 1.460 | 103 | 4 |
| 1.430 | 1.370 | RAIL. CHLORINE | - | 0.00 | 20 | 16400 | 23058 | 1.42 | 1.42 | 1.39 | 1.41 | -0.02 | 1.406 | 720 | 5 |
| 1.560 | 1.530 | RAIL. TIT-FILE | - | 0.00 | 40 | 20350 | 11321 | 1.55 | 1.57 | 1.55 | 1.56 | -0.01 | 1.556 | 814 | 5 |
| 1.610 | 1.540 | MARSAH D. EST. & HOUSING | - | 0.00 | 46 | 43900 | 27635 | 1.61 | 1.64 | 1.58 | 1.60 | -0.01 | 1.629 | 2927 | 5 |
| 1.650 | 1.620 | KHAYAT FARM. 75% | - | 0.00 | 5 | 3583 | 1423 | 1.64 | 1.65 | 1.64 | 1.65 | -0.01 | 1.647 | 1038 | 2 |
| 1.770 | 1.750 | JORDAN STEEL | - | 0.00 | 42 | 28512 | 21612 | 1.76 | 1.78 | 1.75 | 1.76 | -0.01 | 1.758 | 103 | 5 |
| 1.610 | 1.600 | UNION TOBACCO 75% | - | 0.00 | 13 | 5430 | 4246 | 1.60 | 1.64 | 1.62 | 1.63 | -0.01 | 1.620 | 103 | 5 |
| 1.610 | 1.600 | RAIL FIRM 80% 65% | - | 0.00 | 43 | 56295 | 14770 | 1.61 | 1.62 | 1.60 | 1.61 | -0.01 | 1.610 | 563 | 5 |
| 1.470 | 1.440 | INDUS. BLD. | 27.7 | 0.00 | 61 | 8191 | 39047 | 1.46 | 1.47 | 1.44 | 1.45 | -0.02 | 1.458 | 1217 | 5 |
| 1.810 | 1.800 | INDUS. CHIMAMIC | - | 0.00 | 2 | 1000 | 800 | 1.80 | 1.80 | 1.80 | 1.80 | -0.01 | 1.800 | 1025 | 1 |
| 1.460 | 1.440 | KATL. CARBON WIRE | 14.0 | 0.00 | 95 | 164750 | 11193 | 1.44 | 1.46 | 1.43 | 1.44 | -0.01 | 1.446 | 720 | 4 |
| 1.950 | 1.950 | ARAB INV. PORT. FACT. | 69.5 | 0.00 | 3 | 2450 | 2408 | 1.95 | 1.99 | 1.95 | 1.99 | -0.04 | 1.983 | 104 | 3 |
| 1.900 | 1.860 | RAIL. MED. T. INDUS. BANKING | - | | | | | | | | | | | | |

World champion Bulgarian boxer defects to Turkey

ANKARA (AP) — Bulgarian boxer Serafim Todorov, an ethnic Turk who has been World champion three times, has fled to Turkey and asked for asylum, the Turkish Boxing Federation said Friday.

The 125-pound (57-kilogram) Todorov also has won four European championships and was a silver medalist in the 1996 Atlanta Olympics.

The 26-year-old boxer became the third world champion athlete to defect to Turkey from Bulgaria. "Pocket Hercules" Naim Süleymanoglu, who had defected in 1986 as a world champion weightlifter, has since become Turkey's biggest source of pride in world sports. Süleymanoglu won three Olympic gold medals during his Turkish career, becoming the world's first weightlifter to have so many.

Another world-champion boxer, Hafiz Süleymanov, defected in 1989. Both were ethnic Turks.

"We don't issue invitations to anyone to defect here," Caner Doganelli, president of the Turkish Boxing Federation, told the Associated Press. "But



World amateur featherweight champion Bulgarian Serafim Todorov clinches his fist in front of Istanbul's Bosphorus bridge. Todorov defected to Turkey from Bulgaria after entering on a tourist visa (Reuters photo)

when they seek asylum, we welcome them all and try to provide all facilities and opportunities to let them

Kapikule gate on the Turkish-Bulgarian border, the Turkish daily Hurriyet reported. His wife and two children are expected to arrive here soon, the daily said.

"I will be the Naim of boxing," Hurriyet quoted Todorov as saying. "I will bring world and Olympic championships to Turkey." Many famous athletes, who fell into poverty and neglect in former Soviet-block countries after the collapse of Communism, seek better lives in the West.

In Turkey, such defectors, most of them ethnic Turks from Bulgaria, receive a warm welcome from sports authorities, fans and government officials. Many are immediately given apartments and cars.

Todorov will apply for Turkish citizenship, Doganelli said.

Hurriyet claimed that Todorov would adopt his Muslim name Ahmet Sabri. Süleymanoglu had abandoned his Bulgarian name when he switched to Turkish citizenship. During the Communist regime, Bulgarian authorities had forced the 1.5 million ethnic Turks to accept Bulgarian names.

compete on equal footing with other world-class athletes." Using a tourist visa, Todorov entered Turkey Wednesday via the

Huber ousted by Oremans

HANOVER (R) — German second seed Anke Huber came down to earth with a bump on Thursday from her appearance in Sunday's Paris Open tennis final, losing 6-0 5-7 6-4 to Miriam Oremans in the second round of the Hanover Grand Prix.

The defeat was Huber's third in four clashes with the Dutchwoman, ranked 53 in the world. But the German, who received a first-round bye, said she had only herself to blame for an error-strewn performance.

"I just had a really awful day," said Huber, who lost in three hard-fought sets to Australian Open champion Martina Hingis of Switzerland in Paris last Sunday. "I completely slept through the first set."

Huber, who served 13 double faults during the match, appeared to have recovered her rhythm when she snatched the second set with a late break and went 2-0 up in the third.

In a day of upsets, France's Sandrine Testud swept past Dutch fifth seed Brenda Schultz-McCarthy 6-4 6-3, and Anne-Gaëlle Sidot, also of France, beat Belgian seventh seed Sabine Appelmans 6-3 4-6 7-5.

Yelena Likhovtseva of Russia, the eighth seed, restored a measure of order by beating Belgium's Dominique Van Roost 6-1 6-2 to earn a quarter-final against top seed Jana Novotna.

Rios out as Henman waltzes through

ANTWERP (R) — World No. 6 Marcelo Rios of Chile, hampered by a leg injury, slumped to a 4-6 7-5 7-6 second-round defeat by Czech Martin Damm in the European Community Tournament on Thursday, but said he would have forfeited the next round anyhow.

Sixth seed Tim Henman by contrast waltzed into the quarter-finals with an emphatic 6-2 6-3 victory over Swede Mikael Tillström, recently recovered from 'flu.

"I'm not pleased because I lost. But I don't think I should have played. It was not a good decision to play," second-seeded Rios said.

Rios, 21, was forced to pull out of the Marseille final against Swede Thomas Enqvist last week but had come through the first round in Antwerp without mishap.

But Rios, the second seed and highest ranked player in the tournament following the withdrawal of top seed Goran Ivanisevic on Tuesday, was a pale shadow of the player who dominated Romanian Adrian Panu in the first round.

Henman, Britain's brightest tennis star for two decades, said he felt more comfortable on court than in his first-round match against another Spanish player, Sergi Bruguera. "I definitely served better and took opportunities from the baseline with my forehand," said Henman, who became the first seeded player to gain access to the quarter-finals where he meets Spaniard Francisco Clavet.

Six other seeds, including the top four, pulled out or were knocked out.

Fifth seed Felix Mantilla, due on court against Belgian Dick Norman later

on Thursday is the only other seeded player still in the running.

Rios, who had never played Damm before, faded as the match progressed. In the final set he quickly fell 5-2 behind but battled back to level 6-6, more because of Damm's erratic play than through his own performance.

Damm, World No. 48, twisted his ankle when leading 6-5 and had it strapped before resuming play. The decisive tie-break was a sad affair with Rios clearly holding back and the match was sealed 7-3.

Belgian lucky loser Filip Dewulf, who was called up only late on Tuesday after top seed Goran Ivanisevic pulled out with shoulder tendinitis, saved three set points in the first-set tiebreak before beating Frenchman Cedric Pioline 7-6 6-4.

Opel sign 3-year contract with Hingis

ZURICH (R) — Car company Opel, a subsidiary of General Motors Corp, said on Thursday it had signed a three-year sponsorship deal with Switzerland's 16-year-old Australian Open champion Martina Hingis.

Last month Hingis, the youngest-ever Grand Slam champion in the Open era, signed a \$10 million contract to promote Italian sportswear label Sergio Tacchini. Opel did not reveal the sum involved. The company decided not to renew a 10-

year contract with World No 1 Steffi Graf in October, 1995, worth more than \$1 million a year, because of concern about the way her money was being managed.

Graf's father Peter, who had controlled the German's money, was jailed last month for tax evasion.

"Opel already supported us when I was relatively unknown in the world of tennis. This is certainly a good basis for a long-term partnership," Hingis said in a statement.

No blockbuster deals as NBA trade deadline passes

NEW YORK (R) — There was a flurry of trading

activity around the National Basketball Association on Thursday but no major stars changed teams as the 1996-97 trading deadline passed.

Mark Jackson, the NBA's assistant league president, was the biggest name involved in deals completed prior to the 6 p.m. (2200 GMT) deadline for teams to make trades.

A pair of all-stars at the centre of trade rumours — Sacramento Kings guard Mitch Richmond and Golden State Warriors small forward Chris Mullin remained with their teams.

But Jackson is back with the Pacers after new Denver Nuggets general manager Allan Bristow sent the 10-year veteran guard, rookie forward Darvin Ham and centre Lasalle Thompson to Indiana in exchange for swingman Vincent Askew, guard Jerome Allen, forward Eddie Johnson and second-round draft picks in 1997 and 1998.

Indiana had traded Jackson to Denver last summer but apparently decided they were in need of his play-making abilities.

Jackson was averaging an NBA-best 12.3 assists along with 10.4 points and 5.2 rebounds in 52 games for the Nuggets this season.

The New Jersey Nets shipped one of the players they acquired earlier this week in a nine-player deal with the Dallas Mavericks to Los Angeles before he had played a single game for New Jersey.

The Los Angeles Lakers picked up swingman George McCloud from the Nets in exchange for reserve centre Joe Kleine, a first round pick in 1997 and a conditional second round pick.

The McCloud trade had to wait until Monday's nine-player Dallas-New Jersey deal became official. That happened earlier Thursday after guard Khalid Reeves passed a physical examination for the Mavericks.

Dallas had held up the deal pending the result of stress tests on Reeves after finding out he had a heart murmur as a child, a condition that was not known to them at the time of the trade.

The Charlotte Hornets bolstered their backcourt by acquiring veteran shooting guard Ricky Pierce from Denver in exchange for youthful centre George Zidek and guard Anthony Goldwire.

The 37-year-old Pierce is averaging 10.2 points in 33 games for Denver this season. Goldwire, 25, averaged 5.8 points and 2.9 assists. Zidek, 23, was a member of UCLA's 1995 NCAA championship team.

The Hornets also sent often-injured forward Scott Burrell to the Golden State Warriors for journeyman reserve forward Donald Royal, who joins his third team this season.

In another less than earth shattering deal, the Toronto Raptors acquired guard Shawn Respert from the Milwaukee Bucks for centre Acie Earl.

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SOUTH: 1♣, 2♣, 3♣, 4♣, 5♣, 6♣, 7♣
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Sports

Luc Alphand wins 2nd straight Super-G

GARMISCH-PARTENKIRCHEN.

Germany (AP) — Luc Alphand of France won his second straight Super-G slalom Friday and took over the lead in overall World Cup standings.

Shrugging off the frustrations of the just-concluded world championship in Sestriere, Italy, where he failed to medal, Alphand bounced back in the first race after the worlds with a superb performance.

Alphand, who had never won a Super-G until his Jan. 29 triumph in Laax, Switzerland, mastered a

tough Kandahar course to win the race in one minute, 15.32 seconds.

Hermann Maier of Austria, a late starter at 32nd, posted a time of 1:15.87 to finish second, a personal best, while Werner Fraehner of Italy returned after knee surgery to clinch third place with a time of 1:15.90.

Ed Podivinsky of Canada, another late starter, placed fourth, while Kjetil-Andre Aamodt of Norway finished fifth and lost his overall lead to Alphand.

"The World Cup has given me momentum

again," said Alphand, who picked up 100 points for his victory to raise his total to 837 with 10 races left in the season.

"It's great satisfaction after Sestriere," Alphand said after his fifth win of the season.

Aamodt dropped to second with 786 points, while Alphand also extended his lead in Super-G standings.

Alphand is now favorite for Saturday's downhill and Sunday's Super-G. The Frenchman won last year's downhill here and is the defending World Cup champion in the event.

USA Boxing to repay \$1.3 m to USOC

COLORADO SPRINGS (R) — USA boxing agreed to repay \$1.3 million to the United States Olympic Committee after the USOC determined the funds had been improperly applied for or incorrectly accounted for in grant programmes since 1989.

USA Boxing, amateur boxing's governing body in the United States, announced the settlement on Thursday after the organisation's president, Gary Toney, and USOC executive director Dick Schultz agreed on the amount to be repaid.

A USOC audit had found that USA Boxing owed \$3.18 million to the Olympic committee. But USA Boxing officials were able to show a special review panel that \$1.9 million of that money had been spent appropriately on athlete programmes and the amount owed was reduced accordingly.

"I am pleased with the cooperative attitude demonstrated by Gary Toney and the leadership of USA Boxing," Schultz said.

"It will help us to get past this issue and to focus on programmes which will help prepare our boxers for the (2000) Olympic Games in Sydney and the 1999 Pan American Games."

Agassi, Washington fall in Memphis

MEMPHIS (R) — It appears Andre Agassi made the right decision pulling out of the recent U.S. Davis Cup tie against Brazil after the second seed was stunned by the South American nation's top player at the St. Jude Tennis Tournament on Wednesday.

Brazilian Gustavo Kuerten, ranked 83rd in the world, took advantage of a hot serve and Agassi's tender ankle to dump the former World No. 1 6-4 6-2 in 65 minutes on a day of second-round upsets in Memphis.

Fourth-seed Wimbledon runner-up Maliva Washington, also slowed by injury he suffered in winning a Davis Cup singles match against Brazil, dropped a 7-6 (10-8) 6-3 decision to 108th-ranked Argentinian Javier Frana.

In other second-round upsets, Germany's Alex Radulescu beat sixth seed Jason Stoltenberg of Australia, Armenian Sargis Sargsian ousted ninth-seeded American Alex O'Brien, Guillaume Raoux of France knocked out 14th seed Mark Woodforde of Australia, and Jeff Targano bounced 16th-seeded fellow American Vince Spadea.

All the seeded players had received first-round byes and were seeing their



Maliva Washington

first action of the tournament.

Two-time champion Todd Martin, the third seed, escaped the fate of so many of his seeded brethren by taking out American qualifier Bryan Shelton 6-4 6-4.

But the performance of the 20-year-old Kuerten was the revelation of the

night. The Brazilian belted 18 aces, won 29 of 32 first serve points and did not commit a single double fault.

"For me, this was pretty nice," Kuerten said. "One year ago I was sitting by my TV at home watching (Agassi) play."

Kuerten was also matching Agassi groundstroke and blasting winners by the American star even before Agassi re-sprained his ankle in the second set.

With the Brazilian leading 6-4 3-1, the match was halted for about 10 minutes while ATP tour trainer Bill Norris taped and examined Agassi's ankle before clearing him to continue.

Agassi, who also lost here in the second round last year, skipped the post-match interview and headed to a local hospital to have the ankle further examined, tournament officials said.

Washington, who won here in 1992, was severely limited in his mobility due to the effects of tendinitis of the knee that forced him to pull out of last week's San Jose tournament.

"I just wasn't able to do what I wanted to do out there," he said. "I've been struggling with my knee since I came back from Brazil, but you have to play through some injuries."

Despite his limitations, Washington found himself serving for first set at 5-3. But he failed to hold and then lost a long, grueling tie-breaker before falling behind 5-0 in the second to the Argentine.

Do not be dazzled by stars, Grobbelaar match-fixing trial told

WINCHESTER (R) — Jurors in Britain's soccer match-fixing trial were warned on Thursday not to be dazzled by the "star quality" of the defendants.

They should not be swayed by the good looks, wealth, fame or charm of any of the three footballers on trial, said chief prosecutor Richard Calvert-Smith, summing up in the six-week trial.

"It is impossible not to be aware of the extra factor in this case — star quality, if you like," said Calvert-Smith.

"Even the court administration has been infected by it," he said noting that the voice over the intercom summoning the court each morning called the case of "Grobbelaar and others."

Former Liverpool goalkeeper Bruce Grobbelaar, former Wimbledon goal-

keeper Hans Segers and former Aston Villa and Wimbledon striker John Fashanu and are charged with conspiring to throw matches in Britain's premier league.

A Malaysian businessman Heng Suan Lim is accused of paying the goalkeepers, through Fashanu, to rig the matches on behalf of a group of wealthy Asian gamblers.

The four deny the charges, saying they were merely forecasting results. "In fact the case is that of lim and others...The dominant partner in this arrangement was Mr Lim," said Calvert-Smith.

The prosecution has amassed mountains of bank evidence and telephone billing records which show that the four defendants were in constant telephone contact,

especially on the days of big matches.

Shortly after matches, Grobbelaar and Segers would pay large cash sums into their bank accounts.

Both defendants say the money was either for forecasting matches, which although not illegal, is against English Football Association rules, or from other business ventures.

Their defence lawyers have shown video footage of the soccer matches queried by the prosecution, but Calvert-Smith said these were unlikely to have offered proof of innocence.

"Of course, if Mr. Grobbelaar had in front of an audience of millions watched as a ball travelled slowly across the grass, through his legs, and over the line three times at a match at St James' Park,

we would have shown you a video to show he attempted to fix the match," said Calvert-Smith.

"There is a limit to what they can do in front of 50,000 people and a TV audience of millions," he added.

The case against Grobbelaar depends heavily on the evidence of his former business partner, Chris Vincent, who helped secretly to record a conversation in which Grobbelaar said he had lost thousands of pounds by "accidentally" saving goals in one match.

"This case is about corruption," he said.

"Corruption relies on its discovery on whistleblowers," said Calvert-Smith.

Barcelona miss chance to cut Real's lead

SAN SEBASTIAN, Spain

(R) — Barcelona threw away a golden opportunity to cut Real Madrid's six-point lead at the top of the Spanish First Division when they went down to two Javi De Pedro goals at Real Sociedad on Thursday.

The 2-0 defeat came 24 hours after Real Madrid lost their unbeaten league record in a 1-0 reverse at Rayo Vallecano, and is likely to spark off more speculation over the future of beleaguered manager Bobby Robson.

Earlier in the day, Barcelona president Jose Luis Nunez said former England manager Robson had his support and was not under an ultimatum to win the game.

But the style in which Barcelona lost is bound to create unease.

Robson's side were unlucky to see the referee award a penalty just before halftime after real striker Gheorghe Craioveanu seemed to collide with defender Abelardo Fernandez.

Javi De Pedro had no problem beating Barcelona keeper Vitor Baia, who just 24 hours before had saved a spot kick for Portugal against Greece.



Germany's Elena Valbe climbs a hill on her way to win the women's 15 km cross country event at the Nordic World Ski Championships February 21. Italy's Stefania Belmondo took second place and Katerina Neumannova of the Czech Republic took third (Reuters photo)

Capriati advances in Oklahoma City

OKLAHOMA CITY, Oklahoma (R) — Fifth seed Jennifer Capriati shook off another slow start Thursday before storming into the quarter-finals of the IGA Tennis Classic.

The former teenage sensation, now 20-years-old, fell behind 0-3 in the first set to Kyoka Nagatsuka of Japan before rallying for a 6-3 6-2 victory in a second round match.

Capriati earned a quarter-final meeting with top-seeded Olympic champion Lindsay Davenport.

Third seed Kimberly Po

and fourth-seeded fellow American Lisa Raymond also moved into the quarter-finals, as did semi-retired veteran Pam Shriver.

The 19th-ranked Po easily dismissed local favourite Lindsay Lee 6-1 6-4 and will next face compatriot Sandra Cacic.

Raymond, ranked 26th, stopped Alexia Dechaume-Balleret of France 6-4 6-3 to set up a quarter-final with Shriver.

The 34-year-old Shriver, who rarely plays singles anymore, advanced with a 6-4 6-3 win over Canadian Rene Simpson.

"I'm probably ending a 19-year (singles) career

here, so it's nice to get two wins and get into the quarter-finals," Shriver said. "I've made no future plans to play singles again on the corel WTA tour."

Capriati, now ranked 27th in the second year of her comeback, got off to a similarly slow start in her first round match before turning her game up a few notches.

"I've been a slow starter this week," said Capriati, who beat Davenport in the semifinals of the Sydney International in Australia last month.

"It takes me a while to get into it. It's a mental thing. I have to be ready for the first point," she said.

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Abu Ghneim colony aims at strangling Arab East Jerusalem — Palestinians

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (Agencies) — Palestinians say they are ready to give their all to stop a new Jewish settlement which would seal a "ring of settlements" around Arab East Jerusalem and cut it off from the rest of the West Bank.

"We've lost a lot of fights against settlements, but this next one will be a harsh one that we cannot afford to lose," said Mohammad Jaddallah, a member of the Palestinian Land Defence Committee.

"If Israel decides to go ahead with building" at the site, which Israelis call Har Homa, "the Palestinian response will be hard and violent," he told AFP.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is prepared to give a green light to build 6,500 new Jewish homes at although he has delayed making the decision until next week, his advisers said.

The settlement is to be built on 185 hectares of Arab land confiscated by Israel in 1991 on Jabal Abu Ghneim, a hill which dominates the route between East Jerusalem and Bethlehem to the south.

"If Har Homa is implemented it will close off the southeast side of East Jerusalem. It's part of a wall of settlements and Israeli construction entirely encircling East Jerusalem," said settlement expert Khalil Tufakji.

Mr. Tufakji, who monitors settlement activity for the Orient House, the unofficial Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) headquarters in East Jerusalem, showed a map where the blue of Israeli construction closes around the yellow marking older Arab neighbourhoods.

"Building on Jabal Abu Ghneim will separate access from East Jerusalem from Bethlehem and the surrounding villages and from the West Bank in general," he said.

Villages around Bethlehem will also be closed on one side by Har Homa and on the other by settlements further south in the West Bank "meaning they will have no room for future expansion," he said.

A neighbourhood on Jabal Abu Ghneim would connect with two other planned settlements, Givat Arba and Givat Hamatos, which along with the existing neighbourhood Gilo would completely cover Jerusalem's southern face to Bethlehem.

Land confiscations for Givat Arba have been held up in Israeli courts, but settlement at Givat Hamatos has already started with the installing of trailers for residents ahead of building.

Building 6,500 housing units on Jabal Abu Ghneim would bring in 20,000 to 30,000 Jewish residents, "which would completely overturn the demographics in Jerusalem," Mr. Tufakji said.

Since 1967, the Israeli government has built some 40,000 homes for Jews in Arab East Jerusalem in 10 settlements built on the northern and southern sides of the city. It has never built any homes for Palestinians, human rights groups say.

To the east of the city stands the settlement Maale Adumim and a planned ring highway around Jerusalem would cut off Palestinian expansion in that direction, Mr. Tufakji said.

Mr. Jaddallah dismissed claims by Netanyahu aides that money for homes for Palestinians would also be

released with the eventual decision to build Har Homa. "This is just to ease world opinion," he said.

The Israeli housing ministry said in May 1995 that it would build housing for the Palestinian population, but the projects have never materialised.

Palestinian President Yasser Arafat has urged international backers of the Middle East peace process to force Israel to abide by the accords it has signed, amid the row over Jewish settlements in Arab East Jerusalem.

"I am looking for the co-sponsors, America and Russia, the European Union and those who signed the agreement in the White House to protect the peace which they have signed," Mr. Arafat told Turkish television channel TRT in an interview on Thursday.

"Patience has limits," said Mr. Arafat, who was on a one-day visit to Ankara for meetings with Turkish officials.

Mr. Arafat accused Israel of laying a "siege they are insisting on following up against the Palestinian people" and breaking accords establishing Palestinian self-rule.

Turkey's Islamist prime minister, Necmettin Erbakan, backed Mr. Arafat. "Jerusalem is an issue not just for the Palestinian people but for all the Muslim world," he told reporters before talks with the PLO leader.

Mr. Arafat also held talks with President Suleyman Demirel on Turkey's contribution to the peace process. Turkey last week sent 17 soldiers to the West Bank town of Hebron as part of a multinational monitoring force.



RELIEF FOR IRAQIS: A boat loaded with food and medical supplies arrives at Um Qasr port of the southern Iraqi city of Basra from the United Arab Emirates (UAE) on Thursday. The boat, called "The First Mercy Trip," is loaded with nearly \$1 million worth of food and medicine as a gift from the UAE to the sanction-hit country. It is the second shipment by UAE volunteers in two months following the first delivery in January. More "mercy shipments" will be conducted in the future, according to UAE organisers (Reuters photo)

Ekeus begins new mission with discussions with Aziz

BAGHDAD (Agencies) — U.N. disarmament envoy Rolf Ekeus met Deputy Prime Minister Tariq Aziz here Friday in his probe to determine whether Iraq is hiding banned long-range missiles and other weapons.

It was the second Ekeus-Aziz encounter since the chairman of the U.N. special commission (UNSCOM) tasked with disarming Iraq started his mission on Thursday.

The official news agency INA said Foreign Minister Mohammad Al Sahaf and the oil minister, General Ameer Rasheed, also took part in the meeting as they did on the previous day. But it gave no details on their talks.

A third round of talks was to be held later Friday, it said.

A U.N. official said that Mr. Ekeus, a former Swedish diplomat, would discuss "all the weapons files, particularly missiles and chemical weapons" during his three-day visit.

Mr. Ekeus said after his last trip to Baghdad in December that he suspected Iraq was hiding more than the six to 16 missiles previously estimated.

The Pentagon accused Iraq earlier this month of concealing up to 25 ballistic missiles in violation of U.N. resolutions passed after the 1991 Gulf war over Kuwait.

An Iraqi newspaper said Friday that Iraq had provided the United Nations with all the information it wanted on long-range missiles and other weapons and accused the international body of unfairly keeping sanctions in place.

Al Thawra, which is published by Iraq's ruling Baath Party, said: "Iraq is not hiding missiles or information, as Mr. Ekeus claims

or thinks, and we are not responsible if he does not believe what we have told him."

The editorial accused him of "prolonging the suffering" of the Iraq people by refusing to conclude that Iraq has fulfilled its pledge to eliminate its weapons of mass destruction.

The U.N. Security Council imposed sanctions on Iraq after Iraqi invaded Kuwait in August 1990. The sanctions prevent Iraq from selling oil, its economic mainstay, until it has destroyed its weaponry.

Last month, Mr. Ekeus said Iraq was suspected of having transporters, launchers, support systems, rockets, and fuel weapons, "every piece of what is necessary to constitute an operational (missile) force."

He said UNSCOM remained concerned about biological weapons, with Iraq suspected of concealing "more sophisticated bombs than what they have declared to us," including spraying devices.

In December, Mr. Ekeus also failed to persuade Baghdad to allow his inspectors to remove missile engines for analysis in the United States, and said he would raise the issue again during his next trip.

Since November, Iraq has blocked the removal of the missile engines which UNSCOM officials dug up.

Although Iraq unearthed debris from four destroyed missile engines under U.N. supervision in December, the United Nations said it was not enough.

A U.N. source here added that a U.N. inspection team here since Feb. 6 had found a "small piece from a missile engine."

Peres says Habad sect spreading 'evil and hatred in Israel'

TEL AVIV (R) — Israeli opposition leader Shimon Peres has blasted an Australian billionaire and the ultra-orthodox Jewish Habad sect for spreading "evil and hatred" by bankrolling settlement of occupied Arab lands.

Habad in reaction accused Mr. Peres of incitement against it because of political differences.

"Gutnick — he comes to pass out funds in order to argue, to spread evil and hatred, like all Habad now," Mr. Peres told students at the religious Bar-Ilan University in Tel Aviv in remarks broadcast on Thursday by Israel Radio.

Mining mogul Joseph Gutnick, 44, a Habad adherent, has privately funded building in Jewish settlements in the occupied West Bank.

Habad, a worldwide movement devoted to bringing Jews to orthodox observance, says Israel's handing any land to Arabs "endangers" the Jewish state.

Habad in Israel backed Benjamin Netanyahu against then Prime Minister Peres in elections last May. Mr. Netanyahu defeated Mr. Peres, who won a Nobel Peace Prize for deals handing parts of the West Bank to Palestinian rule, by less than a percentage point.

"What Peres is doing is incitement against Habad. Apparently something is defective with his democratic outlook. In his eyes, whoever does not agree with his political line is illegitimate," Habad Israel spokesman Menachem Brod said.

"Habad never attacked Peres personally and never spoke with hatred against him. But we differ from his political line and view it as very dangerous for Israel's future and security."

A centrepiece of the Habad campaign — which some Israelis deemed racist — was a slogan Mr. Gutnick took credit for: "Netanyahu is good for the Jews."

"Habad spread evil against us. Once it was a party that spread love of Israel. Now it is spreading hatred in Israel," Mr. Peres said.

Mr. Habad says it is not a political party. Its endorsement of Mr. Netanyahu was the first time it officially backed a candidate in an Israeli election.

COLUMN

Brain tumour removed from Taylor

LOS ANGELES (AP) — A benign brain tumour was removed from behind the left ear of Elizabeth Taylor in a three-hour operation. The actress, a two-time Academy Award-winner, was expected to recover fully. The tumour was discovered during a routine brain scan Feb. 3. A large group of fans, reporters and TV cameras awaited outside the hospital for news of Taylor, who turns 65 next week. Her four children were also on hand Thursday.

Mandela, ex-wife appear together

SOWETO, South Africa (AP) — A potentially thorny moment passed smoothly when President Nelson Mandela's ex-wife, Winnie, showed up at a ceremony attended by Mandela and his companion. It was the first time all three were seen at the same public function. Mandela and Graca Machel sat together on a podium for the ceremony Thursday kicking off Mandela's campaign to promote education in South Africa. Winnie Madikizela-Mandela sat three seats from Mandela. She and Mandela did not speak and hardly looked at each other. Madikizela-Mandela and Machel also had no contact.

Scare at 'Evita' screening

BUENOS AIRES (AP) — Police cleared a downtown theatre after someone set off an insecticide bomb as the audience watched the premiere of Alan Parker's "Evita." There were no injuries or arrests, police said. Insecticide bombs are used to fumigate houses, movie, which depicts the life of Argentina's former first lady Eva Peron, has sparked controversy in a country where many people strongly admire the late wife of former President Juan Peron.

Hardup Romania to give Chirac 'very special' gift

BUCHAREST (AFP) — Romania's cash-strapped parliament will offer French President Jacques Chirac a cheap but "very special" gift when he was to visit Friday, officials said here. Ion Diaconescu, the Romanian parliament's speaker, had a budget of only 500,000 lei (about \$60) to get Chirac a gift, the officials said, adding, however that the present was to "very special." Romania is suffering under an austerity programme aimed at modernising its struggling economy. And the parliament has recently set stiff limits on its own spending.

New Yorkers stream into marriage offices

NEW YORK (R) — New Yorkers are crowding the corridors of city marriage offices, but officials are not sure whether it is romance or immigrants rushing to wed U.S. citizens because they fear deportation under a new immigration law. City officials said that on Tuesday and Wednesday, fights even broke out among couples who had been waiting for hours to collect marriage licences or to be joined in brief marriage ceremonies. "In my 11 years here this is the biggest increase in marriages I've ever seen," said New York City clerk Carlos Cuevas, head of the city's five marriage bureaux. He said the trend started last month with 2,109 weddings in Manhattan — an increase of 88 per cent in marriage performed compared with January 1996. The increase in the borough of Queens was 118 per cent, he said.

Mubarak: Tourabi responsible for all suffering of Sudanese

BEIRUT (Agencies) — Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak said Sudan's parliamentary speaker, Sheikh Hassan Al Tourabi, was responsible for all the suffering in Sudan.

"The current regime will not last long: Sudan suffers from hunger and an economic collapse," Mr. Mubarak said in an interview to be published by three Lebanese weeklies on Friday.

Mr. Mubarak, however, opposed any partition of Egypt's southern neighbour.

Sudan's partitioning will bring more violence, and the biggest mistake will be to work for such an end. Sudan's unity is the most important element concerning the stability of this delicate region," he said.

Mr. Mubarak reiterated his accusations holding Sudan responsible for the attempt against his life in 1995 in Addis Ababa.

"Tourabi pretends to ignore everything concerning the assassination attempt. However, 10 days ago, he admitted that some (people who took part in the operation) sought refuge in Sudan," he said.

"Sudan still hosts terrorists whom he sends us through the eastern desert. When they are arrested, they admit during interrogation that they were trained in Sudan," he said. New U.N. report on the launch of an air embargo against Sudan, which has been accused of sponsoring international terrorism, is completed, a U.N. official said Thursday.

U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan "will make (the report) available early next week," spokesman Fred Eckhardt told a press conference in New York.

Sudan has been under U.N. diplomatic sanctions since last May for refusing to extradite three suspects in the assassination attempt on Mr. Mubarak.

Khartoum says the three

radicals are not on its territory.

Last August, the Security Council agreed to ban international flights by Sudan Airways, proposing to meet in November to set a start date for the embargo.

The council has postponed this discussion as several countries, including Russia, are concerned about the embargo's impact on the maintenance of Sudan Airways planes and humanitarian operations in southern Sudan.

France wants a fixed term for the embargo while Washington and London say it should have no time limit, like the U.N. sanctions on Iraq and Libya.

Egypt has been lobbying council members furiously to apply a permanent embargo, for which it voted last August.

A New York based human rights group said Friday a Sudanese military tribunal was conducting a secret trial of 21 alleged coup plotters in Khartoum.

In a letter to Sudanese President Lieutenant-General Omar Al Bashir, Human Rights Watch said the trial, widespread arrests by security agents and reported torture reflected how the human rights situation had worsened in the last few months.

It said the accused, known as "the Port Sudan defendants," included 10 civilians, seven of whom were never in the military, and they went on trial at military intelligence headquarters this month.

Human Rights Watch said the procedures in the secret trial made "a mockery of justice" as the defendants had no rights to defence lawyers in a tribunal that was not legally qualified.

It said before last year most similar trials of alleged coup plotters took place in civilian courts except for the execution of 28 military officers in 1990 following a summary

trial.

Human Rights Watch said Gen. Bashir's government was apparently relying on secret military tribunals because convictions and heavier sentences were more likely than in civilian courts.

Sudan's labour leader has called for an Arab summit to discuss the situation in east Sudan and urged Egypt to adopt policies serving the interests of the two countries, the press reported Friday.

Taj Alisr Abdoun, who was reelected by the 13th conference as president of the workers federations, told Al-Sudan Al-Hadith newspaper that the calls were made at a meeting in Khartoum Thursday.

"We called for an Arab summit to discuss acts of aggression on Sudan by nations that serve international Zionist interests," Mr. Abdoun was quoted as saying.

The unions denounced the Sudanese opposition abroad, saying it was "fully responsible for the capture of the eastern border towns of Kurnuk and Qeissan by 'agitating arrogant powers and neighbouring countries against Sudan,'" he said.

They also urged all workers in Sudan to head to the battlefield

to support the war effort in eastern Sudan, he said.

Sudan's National Democratic Alliance (NDA), which groups the northern opposition and southern rebels, launched an offensive on eastern Sudan in Jan. in a bid to overthrow the government in Khartoum.

Sudan is accusing Ethiopia and Eritrea of helping the rebels, a charge they have both denied.

The unions, meanwhile, urged Egypt to "assume a genuine position that serves the two peoples of the Nile valley" and to ban the activities of the Cairo-based Sudanese Workers Federation. Mr. Abdoun said.

Lebanon committee condemns Israeli raid

BEIRUT (AFP) — The international committee monitoring the ceasefire in South Lebanon has condemned Israeli shelling which killed a woman last week and wounded two other Lebanese civilians.

The monitoring group, composed of representatives from France, Israel, Lebanon, Syria and the United States, "unanimously condemned the shelling on Feb. 18," in a statement to the media issued Thursday.

The committee expressed "serious concern" at the killing of Naamah Hallal, 33, by a shell which fell near her house in Habush in the Iqlim Al Tuffah region near the port city of Sidon.

Another woman and a man were wounded in the shelling of Habush and the villages of Arab Salim and Kfar Roummane.

The Israelis said the attack "was in self-defence against launching sites in the villages," according to the committee's statement, issued after two days of meetings.

This is the fourth time that Israel has been blamed for bombardments which killed or wounded civilians in South Lebanon since the committee was set up in August following the April 26 truce accord which ended an Israeli offensive against Hizbollah in South Lebanon.

U.S. court shuts down Internet sex sites on telephone scam charges

WASHINGTON (AFP) — A U.S. federal court has order of three Internet sites closed following a complaint that users had unwittingly run up huge phone bills to a number in Moldova while seeking pornographic pictures.

The Federal Trade Commission (FTC), said it had won a restraining order from a U.S. district court in New York halting an elaborate scam in which thousands of consumers incurred hundreds of thousands of dollars in international calls.

The complaint, lodged after consumers and parents contested their phone bills, targeted five enterprises and individuals doing business as electronic forms management on web sites www.beavisbunhead.com, www.sexygirls.com and www.1adult.com.

According to the FTC, users who visited one of the sites first had to download a special viewer programme known as "David.Exe." But during the operation, the commission charged, the programme disconnected their computers from their Internet service provider and reconnected them to a phone number in Moldova, formerly part of the Soviet Union.

The so-called "Trojan horse" software programme also turned off modem speakers so that consumers could hear neither the disconnect nor the international dialing.

The FTC charged that even after users left the site and went on to other Internet or word-processing activities they continued to incur international calling charges of more than \$2 a minute.

Only after they shut down their computers were users disconnected.

"We're talking about a high-tech fraud that threatens traffic on the information superhighway," said FTC Director of Consumer Protection Jodie Bernstein.

The software programme used by the defendants risks consumers' sense of security about using the Internet.

Ms. Bernstein thanked AT and T for its cooperation in the case. But the company's corporate security manager, Richard Petillo, made clear that AT and T was counting on users to pay up.

"Ultimately we expect all consumers to pay their bills," he told the Wall Street Journal.

The FTC said the defendants made money on the deal when they were paid by the foreign telephone carrier to which the international calls were assigned.

Users were in fact connected to a site in Canada but were charged at rates for Moldova, according to the complaint.

The commission said that until Jan. 27 consumers had been told they could view the material for free. After that, according to the FTC, the defendants informed visitors to the sites they would be connected to Moldova but did not add that the international charges would continue to apply once they went on to other activities.

Lawyers for the defendants nonetheless insisted that consumers had been adequately informed of the charges they would absorb.

Israeli couple

Two Israeli couples were taken into custody by Egyptian police in the Sinai Peninsula after they were released from Israeli custody. The couples were taken to the Egyptian border and then to the Sinai Peninsula. The Israeli couple was taken to the Egyptian border and then to the Sinai Peninsula. The Israeli couple was taken to the Egyptian border and then to the Sinai Peninsula.

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Bar-On could govern Labour sets

THE AVIV (AFP) — Israel's Internal Security Minister Avigdor Kahalon said on Saturday that Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's government could be toppled over a security issue.

Kahalon discovered that a security minister as well as a Minister of Defense, he said, are directly involved in this affair, the government will have to be changed and new elections held. Mr. Kahalon said he had military radio.

Mr. Kahalon's ministerial duties, the police department which launched an investigation three weeks ago, appointed Rabin's attorney general to handle for political reasons.

The security minister's office came a day after a public television report that Mr. Netanyahu had told police he would face indictment next month's short-haul assignment.

Three police officers were named the prime minister's office on Tuesday about the assignment. Netanyahu said his deputy might be used to be charged against him, television said.

The television said police had to issue the warrant 30 minutes into the interview when the Israeli leader refused to give answers to some embarrassing questions.

The prime minister said he did not remember so much which the investigation

Settlement peace pro

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — In an escalation of the war between Jerusalem, Palestinian officials warned Sunday that Israel's construction plans in the Arab eastern part of the city could destroy the whole Israeli-Palestinian peace process.

"Jerusalem is a fireball, it will burn everything in its path," said a Palestinian official. "The Palestinian leader said after a long meeting on the issue, day that ran into early Sunday morning."

The settlement of Jerusalem represents a realisation of the entire process of the peace process.

The Israeli government will bear full responsibility for the consequences of this decision, which makes a decision between the two parties impossible," it said, describing the construction as "a violation of the international law and the agreements given by the Oslo Accords."

The night-time Israeli settlement of Pithulim in Jerusalem, Netanyahu announced the construction of a new Jewish neighbourhood in the now undeveloped area of East Jerusalem, which had been given the approval for the project ahead.

The project involves building 500 homes for 2,000 people. According to Palestinian officials, the project would complete the settlement of Arab Jerusalem and cut